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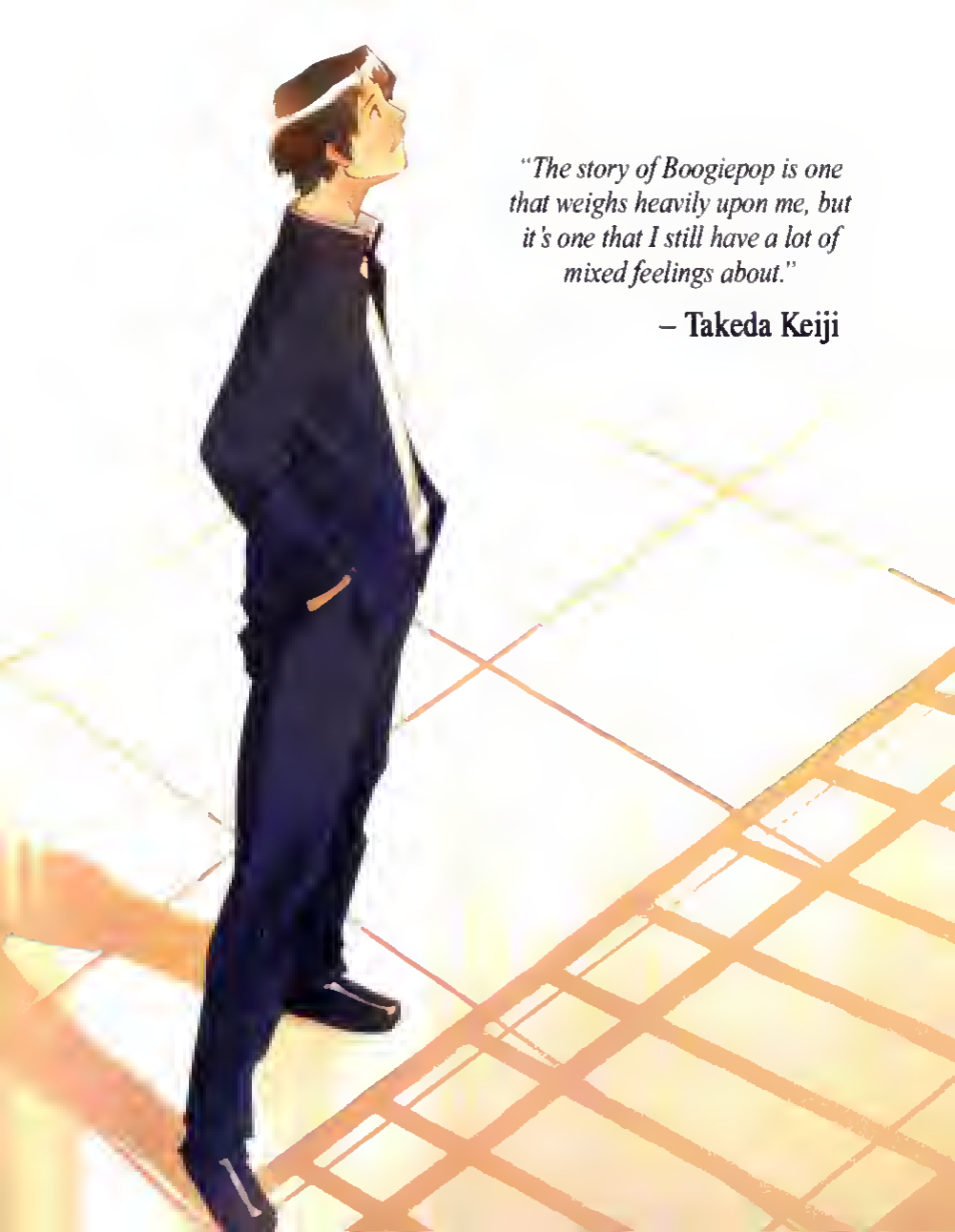
ブギーポップは笑わない 2

Art by
Kouji Ogata
Story by
Kouhei Kadono

"I am automatic. When I detect adversity approaching, I float up out of Miyashita Touka. That's why I am Boogiepop--phantasmal, like bubbles."



"The story of Boogiepop is one that weighs heavily upon me, but it's one that I still have a lot of mixed feelings about."

– Takeda Keiji

"Ultimately...that was ***Boogiepop****."*

– Kirima Nagi

"I kinda just wanted to mess with your mind a little. Sorry."

– Miyashita Touka

CHAPTER 12
CHAPTER 13
CHAPTER 14

"Once you've seen me...you can't be allowed to live."

– Manticore

"Congratulations.. now you're officially our enemy."

– Saotome Masami

CHAPTER 15
CHAPTER 16
CHAPTER 17

"Apparently the Boogiepop stories were being kept secret from boys. It was a myth only the girls knew."

– **Suema Kazuko**

"I think he loved her more than I did."

– Tanaka Shiro

"An alien. He took her back with him into space"

– Kimura Akio

"So it ultimately amounts to nothing."

– Niitoki Kei

CHAPTER 18

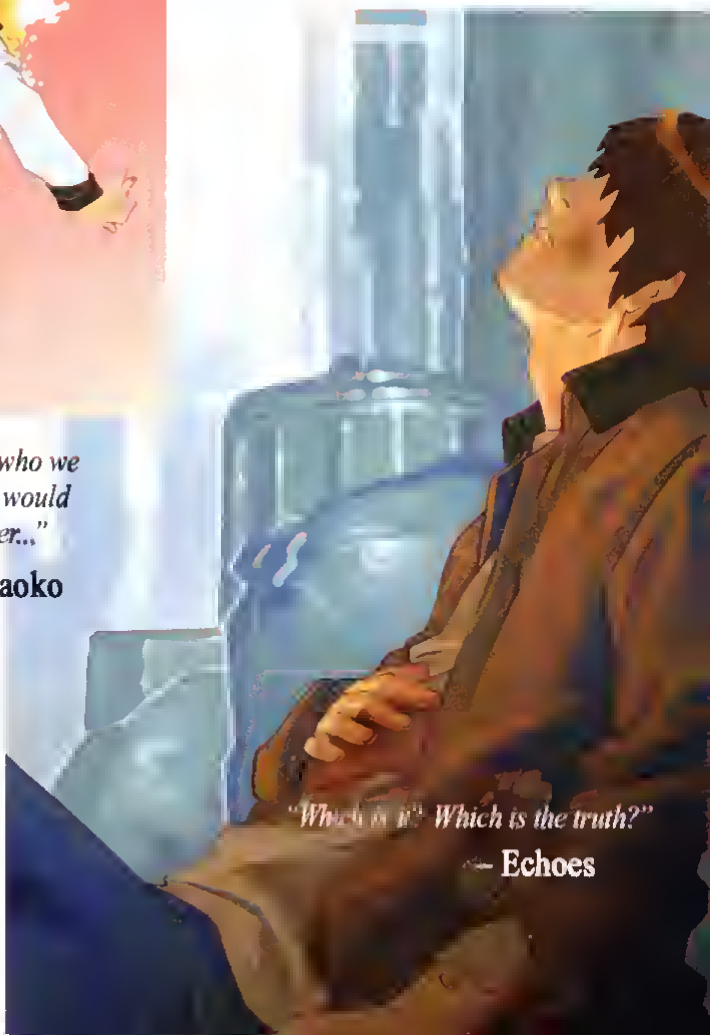
CHAPTER 19

CHAPTER 20

CHAPTER 21
FINAL CHAPTER
SKETCH BOOK

"Why can't we pick who we fall in love with? It would be so much easier..."

– Kamikishiro Naoko



"Which is it? Which is the truth?"

– Echoes

BUT... BUT...THE KIRIMA SEIICHI?!!
Chapter Twelve
第12話
OF COURSE I KNOW OF HIM. I'D LEARNED MOST OF WHAT I KNOW ABOUT CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS FROM READING HIS BOOKS.
WHY WOULD I LIE?
NO, I MEAN REALLY REALLY?
YOU'RE NOT KIDDING?!
YEP, THAT'S MY DAD, ALL RIGHT
HE'S DEAD NOW, THOUGH
I... I KNOW... BUT STILL...
YOU DIDN'T THINK I HAD A STRANGE NAME?
YEAH... I HEARD... BUT REALLY?

I WAS FROM A TYPICAL MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILY, SO HER WHOLE SITUATION FELT KINDA UNREAL TO ME. THIS IS HARDLY WHAT YOU'D CALL A PROPER ENVIRONMENT TO GROW UP IN.
HUNH...
WELL, I'M *BASICALLY* LIVING OFF THE INHERITANCE PAYS FOR SCHOOL AND MOST OTHER THINGS.
UH. NEVER NOTICED.
UH, YOU CALL THAT "SAVING"? *WOW.*
WHAT? WANT THE REASON I ATTACKED KINOSHITA?
UM... SO .?
WHY'D YOU *SAVE* KYOKO?
YEAH.

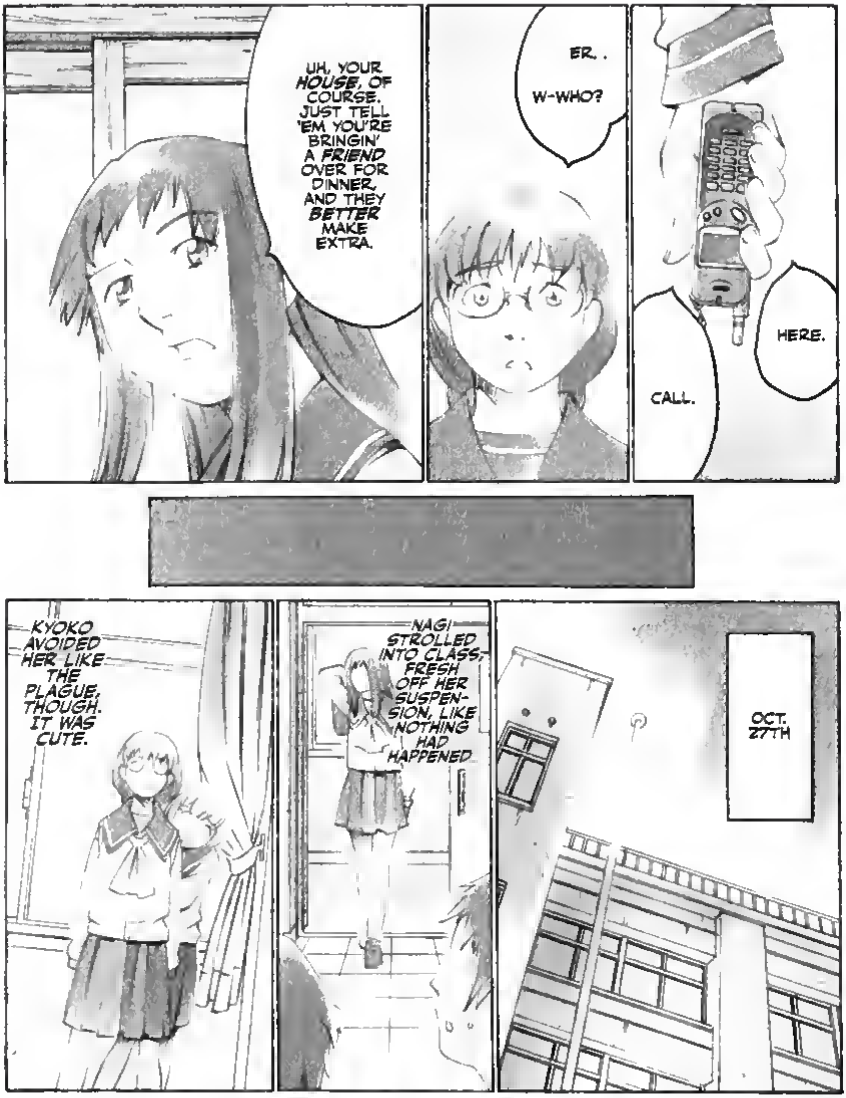
HOW'D YOU EVEN FIND OUT ABOUT ALL THAT?
I DON'T GET IT, THOUGH..
MAYBE I DID..
MAYBE I DIDN'T.
YOU SAVED HER FROM THAT, RIGHT?
WELL, YEAH. SHE TOLD ME ABOUT THAT WEIRD DRUG.

MY FATHER DIED WHEN I WAS TEN.
.....
UH... R-RIGHT
MY MOTHER'D ALREADY LEFT US BY THEN SO UP TO THAT POINT, IT WAS JUST THE TWO OF US LIVING HERE. HE NEVER DRANK, NEVER CHASED AFTER WOMEN. ALL HE DID WAS WORK.
THEN ONE DAY, I GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL AND... FOUND HIM *LYING* ON THE FLOOR.
HE WAS COUGHING UP BLOOD. BUT ALL I COULD DO WAS JUST WAIT THERE BY HIM JUST *HOPING* THE AMBULANCE WOULD GET THERE.
NAG!..
DO YOU KNOW. WHAT *"NORMAL"* IS?
SHAKE SHAKE
IT'S WHEN YOU LEAVE EVERY-THING AS IT IS...
...AND NOTHING *EVER* CHANGES.

THAT'S WHY I...
AND THEN HE PASSED OUT AND NEVER WOKE UP.
THOSE WERE HIS LAST WORDS.
SO, YEAH... HARD TO GET PAST SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
BUT THOSE WORDS HE WAS RIGHT I SURE GAVE UP LIVING NORMAL, ALL RIGHT
.....
LOOK. I'M A PSYCHO.
GOT THE CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND EVERYTHING.
BUT...
THAT'S...

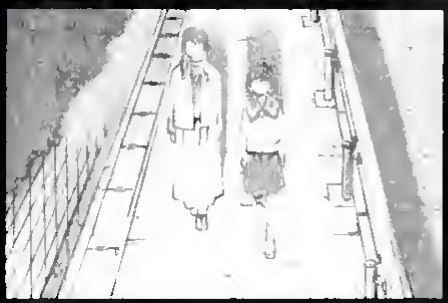
HERE.
CHECK THIS OUT.
2-D-33 Suema Kazuko 8:25-15:40
BUT THIS IS...!
BUT... BUT...
ISN'T THIS ILLEGAL?!
DUH. COURSE IT IS.
I'D NOTICED KINOSHITA'S GROUP WAS SUDDENLY GETTING WORSE, SO I CHECKED IT OUT. HIT THE DRUG STORY.
YEP. I'M LOGGED INTO THE SCHOOL'S NETWORK. ANY INFO I WANT IT'S RIGHT HERE.

I KNOW IT'S WRONG BUT HEY, SOMEBODY'S GOTTA DO IT.
WE SURE AS HELL CAN'T EXPECT THE TEACHERS TO.
T-TRUE...
BUT..
NOT LIKE I HAVE A CHOICE, THOUGH SCHOOLS ARE KIND OF ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF SOCIETY.
THE POLICE CAN'T DO JACK THERE. IT'S WHY YOU SEE SO MANY FACULTY COVER-UPS
LOOK, I TOLD YOU I WAS CRAZY
.....
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN...
IT'S JUST..
WHO IS THIS GIRL? WHY WOULD ANYONE INTENTIONALLY GET THEMSELVES SUSPENDED TO DO THIS KIND OF STUFF?


UH, YOUR HOUSE, OF COURSE. JUST TELL 'EM YOU'RE BRINGIN' A FRIEND OVER FOR DINNER, AND THEY BETTER MAKE EXTRA.
ER. . W-WHO?
HERE.
CALL.
KYOKO AVOIDED HER LIKE THE PLAGUE, THOUGH. IT WAS CUTE.
NAGI STROLLED INTO CLASS, FRESH OFF HER SUSPENSION, LIKE NOTHING HAD HAPPENED.
OCT. 27TH

IT'S WEIRD. NAGI ACTED LIKE SHE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW US. SHE JUST PLOPPED DOWN AT HER DESK AND FELL RIGHT TO SLEEP.
WHEN OUR MID-CLASS BREAK CAME, SHE AWOKE TO GO TO THE BATHROOM. I TOOK THAT OPPORTUNITY TO SLIP OUT THE DOOR AFTER HER.
UM, KIRIMA-SAN?
MM?
OH...
YOU AGAIN.
SORRY, I'VE GOTTA BE UP ALL NIGHT, SO I NEED TO GET AS MUCH SLEEP WHILE I STILL CAN.
I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER, 'KAY?
I WAS ITCHING TO TALK MORE ABOUT LAST NIGHT...
BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS SHE WAS STILL PRETTY OUT OF IT, SO I JUST LET HER DO HER BUSINESS AND SLUMP BACK OFF TO SLEEP.

YOUR FOLKS PROBABLY GET *REALLY* WORRIED WHEN YOU COME HOME LATE, WHAT WITH WHAT HAPPENED *BEFORE* AND ALL.
TELL 'EM YOU RAN INTO ME, AND SAID I COULD COME OVER SINCE MY PARENTS ARE OUT OF TOWN.



YOU'LL...
KIRIMA-SAN...
YOU'LL ACT *NORMALLY*, WON'T YOU?

SHE WAS RIGHT, OF COURSE. IT WAS THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE EVERY-THING.

OKAY, NOW THAT'S ONE DUBIOUS LOOKING SMILE. STILL, SHE'S A PRETTY GIRL. IF SHE DIDN'T FORCE IT AS MUCH, IT WOULDN'T LOOK NEARLY AS CREEPY.
WELL, UH...
IN THAT CASE---
=^"'
GRIN
OF COURSE
I'M NOT DRESSED LIKE A TROUBLE-MAKER, AM I?
WHEN I WANT, I CAN PRETEND TO BE A NORMAL GIRL.
SO, YOU'RE PRETTY SMART, HUH?
I...I SUPPOSE.

HM?
WHAT ABOUT HIM?
OH, I WON'T TELL ANYONE.
I KINDA THOUGHT SO. THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU ALL THAT STUFF.
HEARING HER ASK THAT WAS PRETTY WEIRD CONSIDERING SHE ACES ALL HER TESTS... WELL, THE MAKE-UP ONES, ANYWAY.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M GETTING AT. I MEAN ABOUT KIRIMA SEIICHI.
BUT WHY?
IT'LL JUST COME BACK TO HAUNT YOU AND WARP YOUR PERSONALITY LIKE IT HAS MINE.
WHY? BECAUSE [illegible] CRAP FIVE YEARS AGO IS OVER WITH. JUST LET IT GO.
WHY DO YOU SAY [illegible] LIKE THAT?
TRUST ME...GET OUT NOW WHILE YOU STILL CAN.
YOU'VE READ HIS BOOKS AND HERE I AM, HIS DAUGHTER, DOING ALL THIS STUPID SHIT.

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO END UP LIKE ME?
GLARE"!
SO, THIS IS THE GLARE OF THE FIRE WITCH.
NO... I CAN'T PULL BACK NOW. I'M NOT AFRAID.
WHY...?
YOU BARELY SPEAK TO ANYONE IN CLASS! THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD'VE FOUND OUT ABOUT DOCTOR MURDER!
THAT STUFF'S NOT PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE!!
UM, I...
THAT IS--
I NEVER TOLD ANYONE.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT STUFF FIVE YEARS AGO?

THE ONLY PEOPLE THAT KNOW ARE THE ONES THAT WERE--!
OH MY GOD...
IT WAS YOU. YOU SAVED ME.

IT'S FUNNY. JUSTICE MIGHT WELL PREVAIL IN THE END, BUT IT'S THE ORDINARY PEOPLE, LIKE ME, WHO HAVE NO GUARANTEE OF SURVIVING THAT LONG.
THERE, I WENT AND SAID IT.
IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME! I'VE BEEN OVER IT OVER A HUNDRED TIMES IN MY HEAD. WHY AM I STILL ALIVE? IS IT ONLY BECAUSE THE KILLER WENT AND HUNG HIMSELF?! YEAH, IT FEELS REAL GREAT KNOWING THAT!
IT IS. IT IS!
IT... IT'S NOT IMPORTANT.
LIAR!!
IT WASN'T ME.
.....
BUT IF WE KNEW THERE WAS SOMEONE FIGHTING FOR US... IT'D SURE MAKE THINGS EASIER.
YOU'D AT LEAST BE ALIVE, THEN. IT'S A LOT BETTER THAN KNOWING YOU ONLY NARROWLY MISSED THE CHOPPING BLOCK.

JUST DROP IT.
PLEASE...?
UGH, NEVER MIND.
OH, NO YOU DON'T!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET OUT OF THIS WITH SOME TALL TALE, IRIMA-SAN!
HUNH?
THAT WAS BOOGIE-POP.
SORRY. ULTIMATELY...
SHE BIT HER LIP AND I KNEW IT WAS BEST TO DROP IT.
BUT I NEVER GOT TO SAY THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.
ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS TELL HER, "THANK YOU." AND MAYBE SOMETHING SAPPY LIKE, "IF THERE'S ANY WAY I CAN EVER REPAY YOU, THEN JUST ASK IT! PLEASE, JUST ASK! ANYTHING!"
BUT MAYBE IT'S A GOOD THING I DIDN'T. THERE'S NO TELLING HOW SHE MIGHT'VE RESPONDED.

Once you've seen me...
you can't be allowed to live.

In the blink of an eye, a young girl's precious life is snuffed out and the deadly Manticore's well-laid plans for world domination get shot to hell. With time running out, can Nagi Kinma and the mysterious "Angel of Death" known as Boogiepop put an end to the murderous Manticore's reign of terror before even more innocent lives are lost...?

Find out in this thrilling, extra-sized conclusion to *Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh!*

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Boogiepop doesn't laugh

2

ブギーポップは笑わない

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Kouji Ogata

Story by
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第13話
Chapter Thirteen

HUUH
HUUH
YOU'RE CHASING SOMETHING, AREN'T YOU?
YOU SHOULD ONLY CRY ONCE YOU'VE FOUND IT.
THUP
EXACTLY. HE WAS CHASING SOMETHING.

HIS OWN CHILD... THE MANTICORE.
NOT A CHILD IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE, BUT RATHER A CHILD CLONED FROM HIM... A CHILD THAT COULD SPEAK ALL THE "WORDS" HE COULDN'T. BUT SHE CAN'T STAY HERE.. HE KNOWS THAT.
FOR HE, LIKE THE MANTICORE, WAS ALIEN TO THIS PLANET AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT EXIST HERE
A DECISION THAT HAS TO BE RIGOROUSLY BALANCED.
AHHH!
HIS OBJECTIVE...?
ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, HE HAS TO MAKE A DECISION...
FAILURE TO REMOVE HER IS NOT AN OPTION. ALL OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION DEPENDS ON IT.
HE MUST NOT BE PREVENTED FROM CARRYING OUT HIS PRIMARY OBJECTIVE.

BUT WHEN I FIRST MET HIM, I DIDN'T KNOW ANY OF THAT...
BUT EVEN NOW THAT I DO, I DON'T THINK IT'S ALL THAT IMPORTANT.
HE WAS IN TROUBLE.
HE NEEDED MY HELP.
I COULDN'T'VE JUST WALKED AWAY. THAT'S NOT WHO I AM.
OH NO! Y-YOU'RE HURT!
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

HANG ON...!
UNH... AAAAAH...
RIING RIING
CLICK
NAGI? IT'S NAOKO, GOT A MINUTE?
NO, IF YOU SEE A PERSON IN TROUBLE, YOU STOP AND HELP.
IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

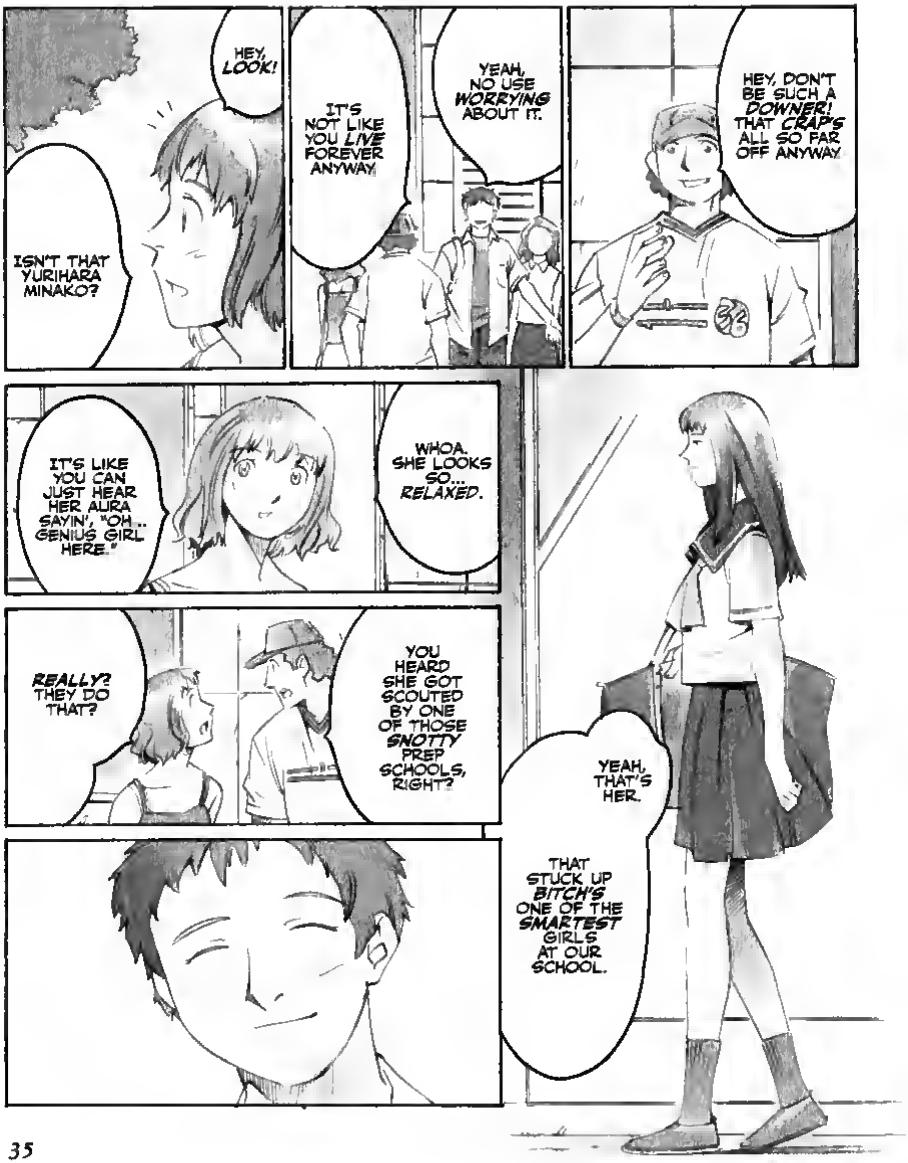
SURE, LOTS OF GUYS START DATING WHEN THEY'RE FIFTEEN, BUT I WAS ALWAYS JUST SOME "NICE GUY." GIRLS DON'T WANT THAT. THEY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NICE GUYS, SO THAT'S WHY I NEVER REALLY OPENED UP TO ANYONE BEFORE. BUT NOW'S DIFFERENT.
I'M SEEING SOMEONE... I'M ACTUALLY SEEING SOMEONE.
SEPT. 18TH, SATURDAY
SAOTOME-KUN!
HEY, YOU FREE THIS AFTERNOON?
JUST CURIOUS.
NOPE, NO PLANS, KUSATSU-SAN.
OH, UH, COOL. SACHIKO GOT SOME FREE MOVIE TICKETS YOU WANNA COME WITH US?
UH...US?

...WELL, ER, MAYBE--
AND YOU WANT ME TO TAG ALONG TOO, SO YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE THE THIRD WHEEL.
YOU KNOW SAKAMOTO-KUN FROM CLASS F, RIGHT? HE HOOKED UP WITH SACHIKO.
BUT SHE'S REALLY NERVOUS AND--
HEY, IF YOU JUST WANT ME TO TAG ALONG, THAT'S COOL.
I'D JUST GO HOME AND PLAY SOME GAME ANYWAY.
OH, UH, TH-THAT'S NOT...
SO...
TWO-THIRTY BY THE STATION, GOT IT?
SURE.
HEH. SURE, WHATEVER. SOUNDS COOL.
R-REALLY?! THAT'S GREAT!
OH, AND, HEY, DON'T TELL ANYBODY, BUT SACHIKO'S ACTUALLY KINDA HAPPY THAT SAKAMOTO-KUN ASKED HER OUT. SHOULD BE FUN TO WATCH!
BGAM

USED TO ANNOY THE HELL OUT OF ME.
YEAH, I KNOW SHE'S GOT A CRUSH ON ME.
BUT NOT ANY MORE...

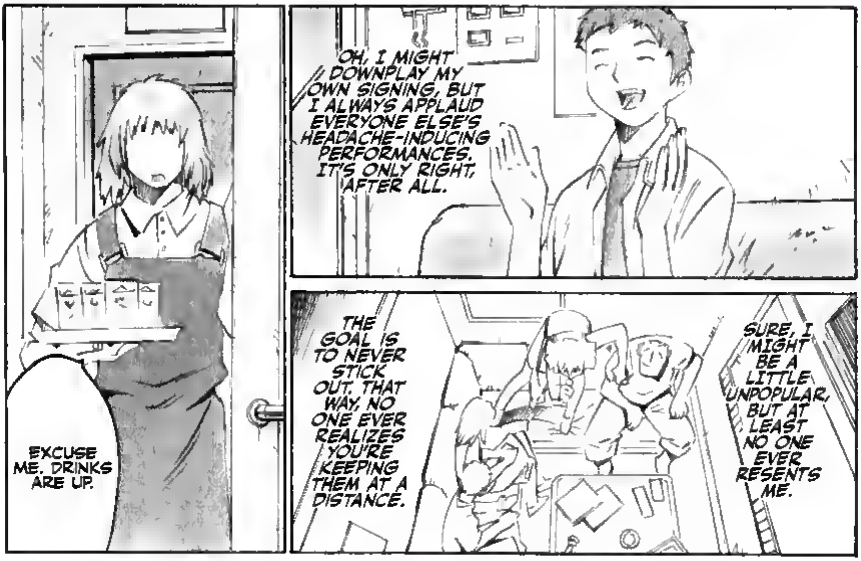
ドォン
BANG

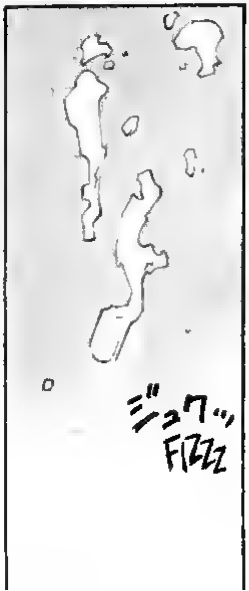
WHAT?! NO WAY!
I THOUGHT IT WAS AWESOME!
EH, IT WAS OKAY.
HA HA!
Cool!
Yeah
OH YEAH, DIDN'T SHE SAY HER DAD'S COMPANY WENT BANKRUPT? GUESS THAT MEANS NO COLLEGE FOR HER.
YEAH, SUCKS TO BE THEM.
GOD, I HOPE WE NEVER END UP LIKE THAT.
WHOA, LOOK AT ALL THOSE CRAM SCHOOL STUDENTS.


HEY, LOOK!
ISN'T THAT YURIHARA MINAKO?
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU LIVE FOREVER ANYWAY.
YEAH, NO USE WORRYING ABOUT IT.
HEY, DON'T BE SUCH A DOWNER! THAT CRAP'S ALL SO FAR OFF ANYWAY.
IT'S LIKE YOU CAN JUST HEAR HER AURA SAYIN', "OH... GENIUS GIRL HERE."
WHOA. SHE LOOKS SO... RELAXED.
REALLY? THEY DO THAT?
YOU HEARD SHE GOT SCOUTED BY ONE OF THOSE SNOTTY PREP SCHOOLS, RIGHT?
YEAH, THAT'S HER.
THAT STUCK UP BITCH'S ONE OF THE SMARTEST GIRLS AT OUR SCHOOL.

EXCELLENT. THAT SUGGESTION PLAYED RIGHT INTO MY HAND.
SURE. SOUNDS GOOD.
SAY...
ANYONE UP FOR SOME KARAOKE?
WE DON'T MAKE EYE CONTACT.
WE PROMISED EACH OTHER WE WOULDN'T... NOT IN PUBLIC. ANYWAY.

AH! YOUR TURN, SAOTOME-KUN.
HEH.
HERE.
THANKS.
I ALWAYS GO FOR THE EASY POP SONGS THAT EVERY-ONE'S ALREADY SICK OF.
IT'S A GREAT STRATEGY. IT KEEPS EVERYONE FROM GETTING ALL WORKED UP.
♫ You're My Shock! ♫


EXCUSE ME, DRINKS ARE UP.
OH, I MIGHT DOWNPLAY MY OWN SIGNING, BUT I ALWAYS APPLAUD EVERYONE ELSE'S HEADACHE-INDUCING PERFORMANCES. IT'S ONLY RIGHT, AFTER ALL.
THE GOAL IS TO NEVER STICK OUT. THAT WAY, NO ONE EVER REALIZES YOU'RE KEEPING THEM AT A DISTANCE.
SURE, I MIGHT BE A LITTLE UNPOPULAR, BUT AT LEAST NO ONE EVER RESENTS ME.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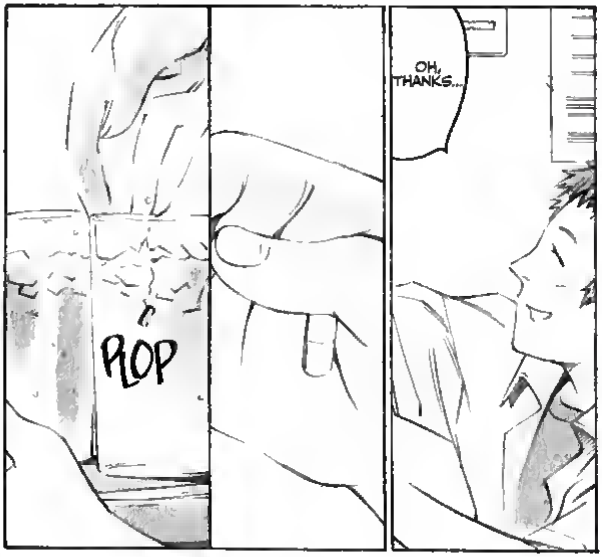
FIZZ


PLOP
OH, THANKS...

YOU'RE SO SWEET!
OH, DUDE... THANKS!
HERE, GUYS. SODAS ARE ON ME.
HERE YOU GO, KUSAT'SU.
ENJOY.
OH, UH...
THANK YOU.

MMM!
THAT HIT THE SPOT.
SLIP
SLIP

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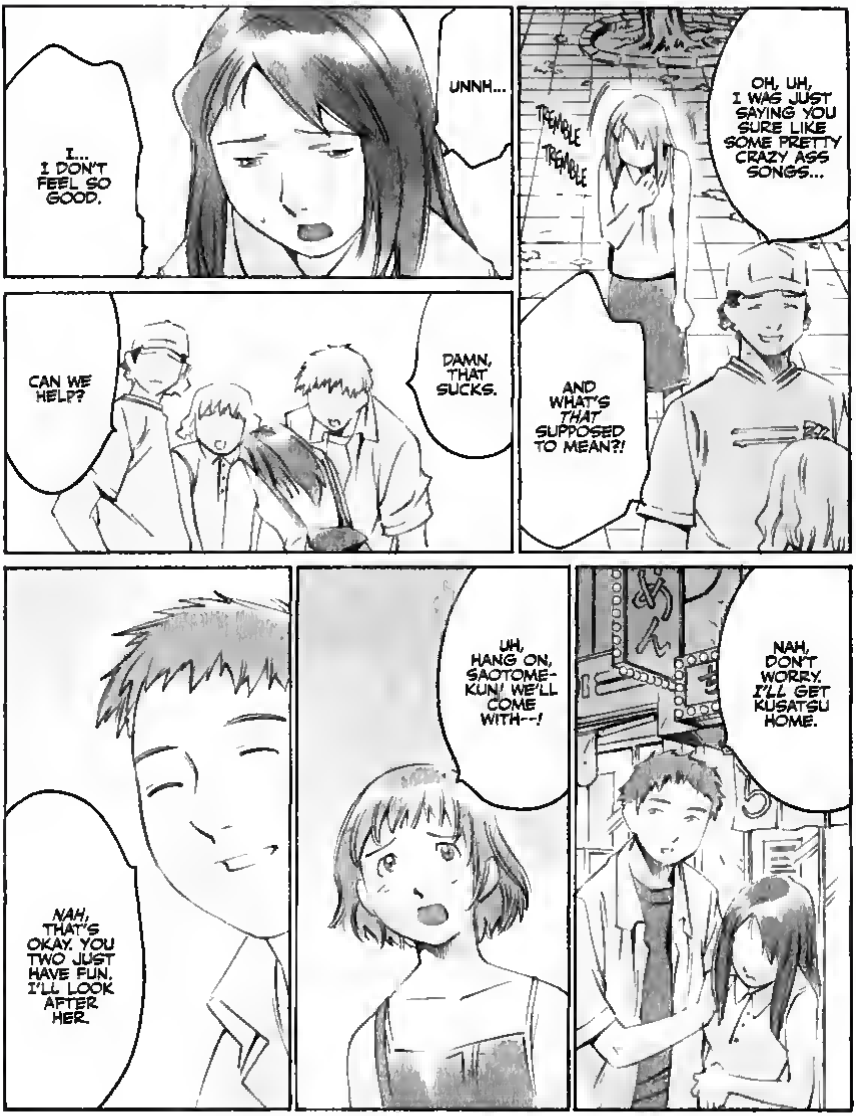
TO BE HONEST, THE FIRST GIRL I EVER REALLY FELL IN LOVE WITH WAS KIRIMA NAGI.
Chapter Fourteen
第14話

I ASKED HER OUT LAST MAY, AND SHE REJECTED ME ON THE SPOT.
SORRY, KID, I.... I DON'T HAVE THE TIME.

UH, NO. NOT REALLY.
.....
IS...IS IT BECAUSE I'M YOUNGER?
SEE, YOU LOOK NORMAL ENOUGH.
BUT ME? I'M NOTHING BUT TROUBLE.
IN FACT, I WAS ACTUALLY RELIEVED SHE BRUSHED ME OFF LIKE THAT.
AS CRAZY AS IT SOUNDS, I WAS HURT WAY LESS BY THAT THAN I'D EXPECTED.
SORRY.
BUT, UH... THANKS ANYWAY.
YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT CAN BE WAITING FOR YOU JUST AROUND THE CORNER...

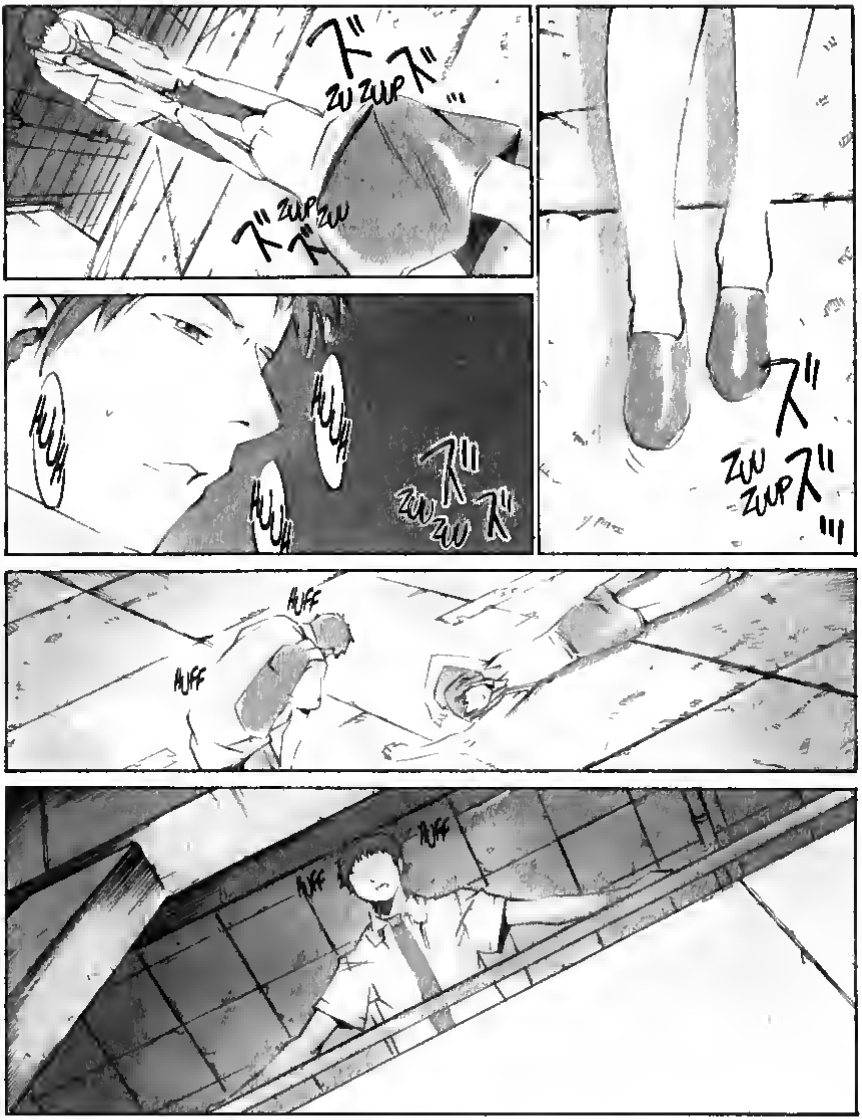
HEY, SAOTOME, YOU CAN TAKE KUSATSU ON HOME. I'VE GOT NOGUCHI COVERED.
whisper whisper
OH, I JUST LOVE SINGING!!!
HEY NOW, WHAT'RE YOU WHISPERIN' ABOUT?!
GRIN
SURE, MAN. GOOD LUCK.


UNNH...
I... I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD.
OH, UH, I WAS JUST SAYING YOU SURE LIKE SOME PRETTY CRAZY ASS SONGS...
TROUBLE
TROUBLE
AND WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
DAMN, THAT SUCKS.
CAN WE HELP?
NAH, DON'T WORRY. I'LL GET KUSATSU HOME.
UH, HANG ON, SAOTOME-KUN! WE'LL COME WITH--!
NAH, THAT'S OKAY. YOU TWO JUST HAVE FUN. I'LL LOOK AFTER HER.

HEY, YOU HEARD THE MAN. HE'S GOT IT COVERED.
ER... BUT...
Don't worry, babe! I won't try anythin'
Better not...
めん
RAMEN
ちゃーし

CLOP
CLOP
SWAY
SWAY
I-I'M SORRY, SAOTOME-KUN...

ドサ
THWUMP"
zu zup zu zuup


ズ
ZUZUPズ
ZUPZUズ
ズ
ZUZUPズ
HUHH
HUHH
HUHH
ズ
ZUZUズ
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

TMMP
WERE YOU SUCCESS-FUL?
WHOOSH
TAAP

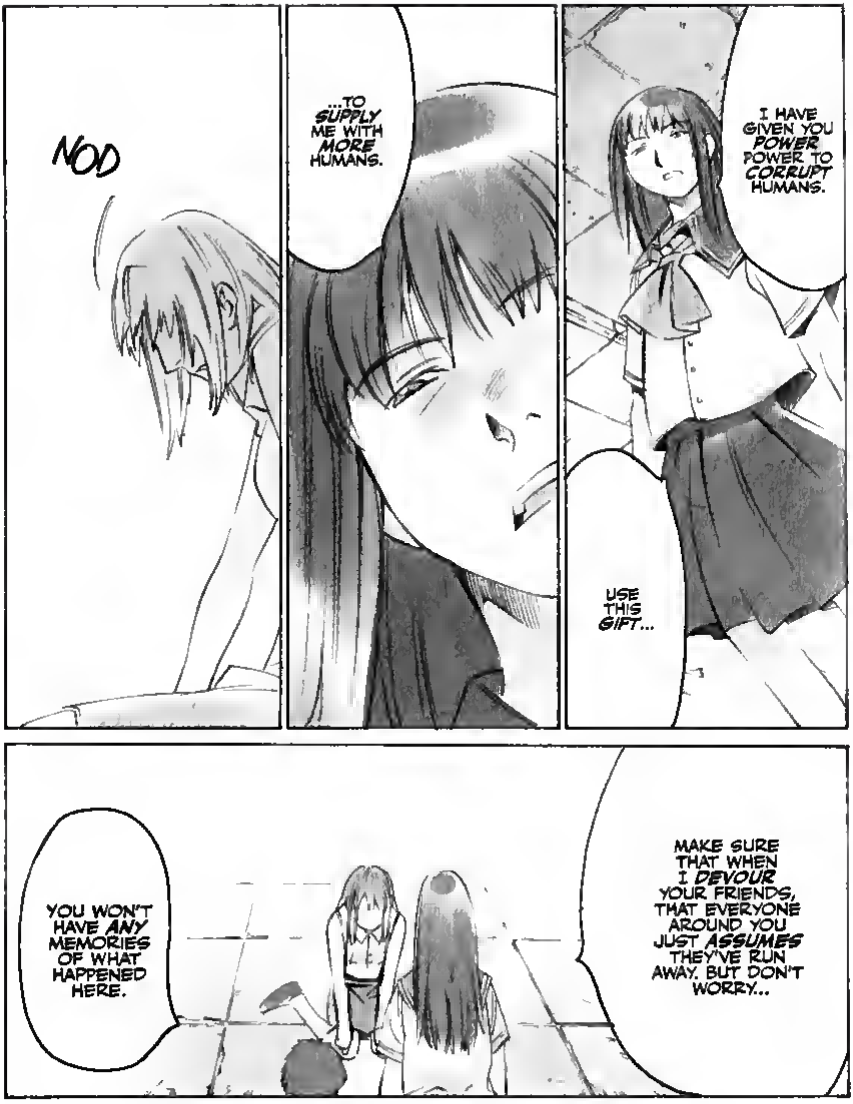
THAT ONE?
THE OTHER GIRL WAS BETTER.
SEE FOR YOURSELF.
EVEN SO...
IT SEEMS LIKE A WASTE NOT TO EAT HER NOW.
DOES SHE NOW?
FINE THEN I'LL TRUST YOUR JUDGMENT, SAOTOME-KUN.
NOT REALLY. THIS GIRL HAS MORE FRIENDS THAN YOU'D THINK.

HUMAN SOCIETY MAKES IT SO HARD TO MOVE ABOUT.
YEAH, BUT IF WE USE HER AS BAIT, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ASSIMILATE ABOUT FIVE OF 'EM IN NO TIME.
SO, FOR NOW, WE WAIT, MANTI-CORE.
スリ
FHP
THLURP
THLURP

I SO WISH YOU'D LET ME EAT HER.

AAARRGH!!
THWAAM
TWITCH
TWITCH
AAUUH...
AAAGH!
THWAAM
THWAAM
THAP
WHAM
WHAP
THWAM
THWOOMP

UGH! DON'T WANT TO CATCH A WHIFF OF THAT...
PLIP PLIP
GAAA ARRHH! WAAATTH!!
NO, IT WOULDN'T DO FOR YOU TO GET ADDICTED AS WELL, SAOTOME-KUN. YOU'RE TOO VALUABLE.
TRINKLE
HUF HUF
PAY ATTENTION... GIRL.


NOD
...TO SUPPLY ME WITH MORE HUMANS.
I HAVE GIVEN YOU POWER. POWER TO CORRUPT HUMANS.
USE THIS GIFT...
YOU WON'T HAVE ANY MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED HERE.
MAKE SURE THAT WHEN I DEVOUR YOUR FRIENDS, THAT EVERYONE AROUND YOU JUST ASSUMES THEY'VE RUN AWAY. BUT DON'T WORRY...

YOU'LL JUST...GO *BAD* OF YOUR *OWN* FREE WILL.
CORRUPT THEM WELL, MY PET, AND I'LL *SAVOR* YOUR BODY WHEN THE TIME COMES.

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Chapter Fifteen
第15話

YEAH, THE PLAN'S IN MOTION.
IT WENT WELL?
THAT ANNOYING GIRL'S NOTHING MORE THAN A *PUPPET* NOW. SHE'S THE PERFECT VEHICLE TO GET ALL HER FRIENDS *HOOKED* ON OUR LITTLE *DRUG*.

I'VE GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, THOUGH. ALTERING HER CELLS SO THAT SHE REGURGITATES THE FLUID HERSELF IS NOTHING SHORT OF GENIUS.
DROOL
HELL, SHE WON'T EVEN NOTICE WHERE IT COMES FROM.
AND AT THE RATE HER BRAIN'S SHRINKING, SHE'LL BE TOO RETARDED TO CARE.
HEE HEE HEE...

WE FIRST MET ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO.
IT WAS RIGHT BEFORE THE START OF SUMMER VACATION.
SEMPAI? YOU THERE?
HUH? ISN'T THAT... THAT SMART GIRL?
YURIHARA MINAKO
UH, HELLO?
RATTLE

YOU SAW ME.
AH
HISS!
ONCE YOU'VE SEEN ME...YOU CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO LIVE.

KROOOSH!
A TAP!

I WAS IN NEED OF A NEW BODY...
WHAT TIMING.
AND WHAT *BETTER* FORM TO COPY THAN A *MALE* ONE
.....
WHA- WHAT? C-COPY?!

WELL, IN THAT CASE IT'D PROBABLY BE MORE [illegible] JUST TO LEAVE ME ALIVE.
HUNH...
YES. I SHALL *BECOME* YOU...AND *BLEND* INTO HUMAN SOCIETY.
WELL... I'M TOO *HIGH* PROFILE PEOPLE KNOW ME. YOU TRY AND TAKE MY PLACE, AND PEOPLE'LL NOTICE PLUS, YOU'RE IN THE *BEST* FORM AS IT IS. A *STUCK UP* TEACHER'S PET LIKE YURIHARA MINAKO *DOESN'T* HAVE ANY FRIENDS. PEOPLE DON'T GIVE A *CRAP* ABOUT HER.
AND *WHY* SHOULD I?

IT'S THE SAME WITH KIRIMA NAGI. I DIDN'T REALLY WANT TO DATE HER...
I WANTED HER TO KILL ME.
I WANTED TO DIE. I WANTED THIS POWERFUL BEING TO RIP ME APART.
I WAS BITTERLY DISAP-POINTED, TO SAY THE LEAST.
WHY ARE YOU SO QUIET?
DON'T YOU STRUGGLE OR BEG LIKE THE OTHERS?
.....
YOU AREN'T SCARED?

THAT'S BECAUSE I...I THINK I LOVE YOU.
EH?

I TOLD YOU SO.
THEY JUST THINK I'VE ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS.
NOBODY CARES IF YURIHARA MINAKO IGNORES THEM IN CLASS.
YOU WERE RIGHT, THOUGH, SAOTOME-KUN.
THIS FORM DOES FIT MY NEEDS WELL.
MMM...
MOSTLY. BUT BE CAREFUL... THERE ARE A FEW EGOISTS WHO THINK OTHER PEOPLE ARE JUST AN EXTENSION OF THEMSELVES.
EVEN YURIHARA MINAKO'S OWN PARENTS DON'T NOTICE THE DIFFERENCE. IT'S HILARIOUS!
WANT ME TO EAT THEM?
MY PARENTS ARE LIKE THAT.
ARE ALL HUMANS LIKE THAT?

EXACTLY.
TRUE. BEST TO BE CAUTIOUS.
THIS WORLD WILL BE OURS SOON ENOUGH.
NOT YET.
IT'S TOO EARLY FOR THAT.
Tristan
BUT THERE MUST BE AGENTS FROM THE INSTITUTION PURSUING ME
WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT THEM?
YES, I'D LIKE TO HAVE TWO OR THREE MORE AS GUINEA PIGS.
BUT EVENTUALLY, I'D LIKE TO HAVE A WHOLE ARMY OF THEM.
SHOULD WE MAKE OURSELVES SOME MORE SLAVES?

LET'S JUST HOPE THEY DON'T FIND YOU BEFORE...
WE'RE ABLE TO FIGHT BACK.
GOOD. SO WE SLAUGHTER ANYONE WHO WISHES TO ERASE ME AS A FAILURE.
RIGHT.
YOU'RE SURE AS HELL NOT A FAILURE.
YOU'RE GONNA BE THE NEW RULER OF THE WORLD.

OUR PLAN IS TO RESHAPE HUMAN SOCIETY WITH OURSELVES AT THE CENTER.
AND I HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE THAT POSSIBLE. I CAN BECOME ANY HUMAN I WANT, AND MAKE ANYONE DO AS I DESIRE.
BUT...
I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD THAT POWER...
UNTIL SAOTOME-KUN CAME ALONG.

I HAD NO PARENTS OR FAMILY. I WAS JUST SOME CLONE FROM A FAILED EXPERIMENT.
AND THE ONLY ONE THAT EVER LOVED ME...WAS SAOTOME-KUN.
I KNEW NOTHING OF THIS WORLD AROUND ME.
UNTIL THEN, I WAS ALONE. I WAS JUST ANOTHER ANIMAL, STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE.

SAOTOME-KUN...
YOU ARE INDEED MY PRINCE.
I LOVE YOU.

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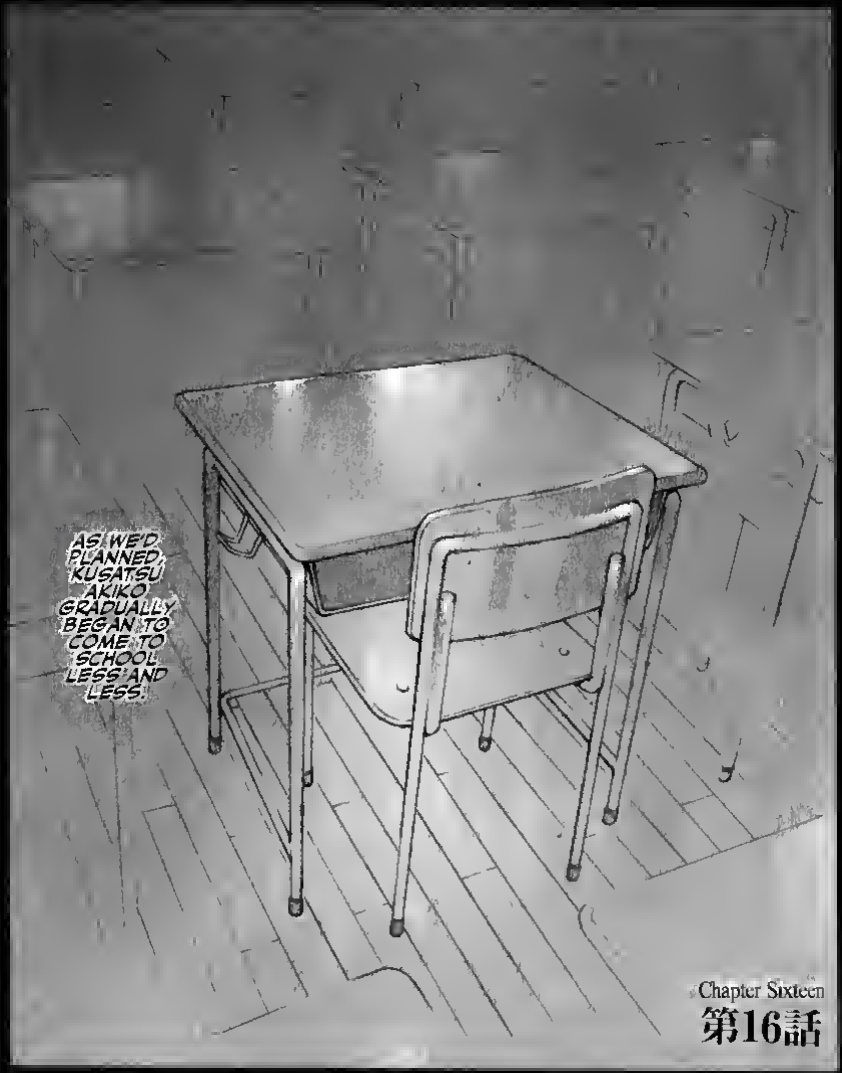
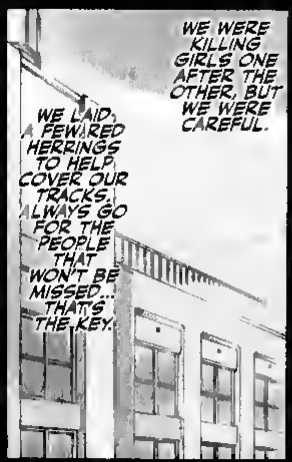


Chapter Sixteen
第16話

IT WAS EASY ENOUGH.

BUT SOMETHING WENT WRONG...


WE WERE KILLING GIRLS ONE AFTER THE OTHER, BUT WE WERE CAREFUL.
WE LAID A FEW RED HERRINGS TO HELP COVER OUR TRACKS. ALWAYS GO FOR THE PEOPLE THAT WON'T BE MISSED... THAT'S THE KEY.

A MONTH AFTER SHE'D BEEN ALTERED, KUSATSU AKIKO'S BEHAVIOR BECAME STRANGE AND ERRATIC.
OCTOBER 11TH
WE COULDN'T LEAVE HER LIKE THAT.
IF SHE PASSED OUT AND WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL...
UH-OH...
Yaoko!
WHEN PEOPLE WOULD SPEAK TO HER, SHE BARELY SEEMED TO NOTICE, MUCH LESS REPLY.
THEN WORD WOULD SURELY GET BACK TO THE INSTITUTION OF HER CONDITION AND THE JIG WOULD BE UP.
AND THE FIRST STAGE OF OUR EXPERIMENT WAS OVER.
SO YURIHARA WAS FORCED TO DISPOSE OF OUR LITTLE PUPPET..

IT CORRECTS
GRRRR
UNFORTUNATELY, WE STILL HADN'T MANAGED TO FIND A SECOND SUCCESSFUL TEST SUBJECT.
DAMN IT!
WHY WON'T IT WORK?!
WIPE
I'M SORRY.
I'LL GET IT RIGHT NEXT TIME.
GRIP
I KNOW THAT, BUT.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
WE'LL HAVE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES.

THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM.
WE'RE HUNTING TOO MUCH AT SCHOOL.
GRAB!
BUT WHY?!
I CAN DO IT NOW!
NO ..
WE SHOULD WAIT A WHILE.
WE HAVE TO CUT BACK, BUT WE HAVE TO CONSIDER YOUR FOOD AS WELL.
THAT HASN'T BEEN A PROBLEM SO FAR, BUT WE NEED SOME ALTER-NATIVES.
.....
I..I UNDERSTAND.
I'LL GO WITH WHATEVER YOU RE-COMMEND.

OCT. 12TH
YOU DAMN HOODLUM!
Y-YOU JUST STAY RIGHT THERE!!
AH! YOU! YOU'RE ON THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE, AREN'T YOU?
YES, SAOTOME FROM 1-D.

Someone, please! Come quickly!!
CLOP CLOP
CLOP CLOP
THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE! WATCH THAT GIRL! DON'T LET HER GET AWAY!!
Uh, is anyone...?
女子 LADIES
STAFF RESTROOM
職員トイレ

WAIT, THOSE ARE--
MILD SEVEN
EX
L
S-SEMPAI, WHAT'S GOING ON IN...?
!
OH, SAOTOME-KUN...IT'S YOU.
YEAH, WELL... YOU KNOW HOW IT IS.
I CAN SEE GETTING CAUGHT...
BUT WHY IN *HERE* OF ALL PLACES?

LOOK, SORRY ABOUT THAT *OTHER* THING, BUT I *STILL* THINK YOU'RE *BETTER* OFF.
SEMPAI...
UM--
.....
WHATEVER.
WHAT DO YOU CARE?
YEAH, WHY?
OH, HEY!
YOU'RE IN 1-D, RIGHT?
OH...
NO, THAT'S...

ER, UM. . N-NOT EXACTLY...
BA BUMP
YOU HAPPEN TO BE FRIENDS WITH KUSATSU AKIKO?
YOU KNOW HER WELL?
NO! I..I MEAN...
ON A DATE?
WE . WE WENT OUT ONCE.
UH, BUT IT WAS ONLY THAT ONCE!

WELL... YEAH...
SHE HAS BEEN A LITTLE... DIFFERENT...
I WASN'T LIKE THAT... IT WAS JUST A-
I JUST WANNA KNOW IF YOU NOTICED HER ACTING WEIRD LATELY? SEE ANYTHING LIKE THAT?
WHOA! HEY, TOO MUCH INFORMATION
WHAT DOES?
HMM...
MATCHES UP.
I DUNNO. A COUPLE OF WEEKS.
HOW LONG?

NAH...
IT'S NOTHING IMPORTANT.
MM?
OH...
NEVER MIND, JUST STUFF.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO KUSATSU?
IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP, SEMPAI, I--
I KNOW THAT.
I'VE GOT IT COVERED.
SOMETHING COULD'VE HAPPENED TO HER!
OF COURSE IT'S IMPORTANT!
SO, IT'S SOMETHING BIG ENOUGH THAT YOU'RE DELIBERATELY GETTING YOURSELF SUSPENDED OVER?
JUST LET ME TELL THE TEACHERS IT'LL BE OKAY.

PAT
BUT THERE HAS TO BE SOME-THING WE CAN DO!!
HA! THEY WON'T DO ANYTHING!
THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH OF WAGE SLAVES.
THANKS... BUT NO.
YOU'RE A GOOD KID, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO GET YOURSELF CAUGHT UP IN THIS. I CAN HANDLE IT.
BUT...

UM, SENSEI, THIS ISN'T...
AH HA! YOU AGAIN!
ズ"ん STOMP
ズ"ん STOMP
WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?!
LOOKS LIKE EVIDENCE!
SNATCH

YOU'RE COMIN' WITH US!
SENSEI, W-WAIT!
.....
WE'VE GOT THIS COVERED JUST GET BACK TO CLASS.

MATCHES UP?
ABOUT THE ONLY THING THIS MATCHES UP TO IS THAT USELESS SUZUMIYA TAKAKO.
STILL, NAGI KNOWS SOME-THING...
SOMETHING A LITTLE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT.

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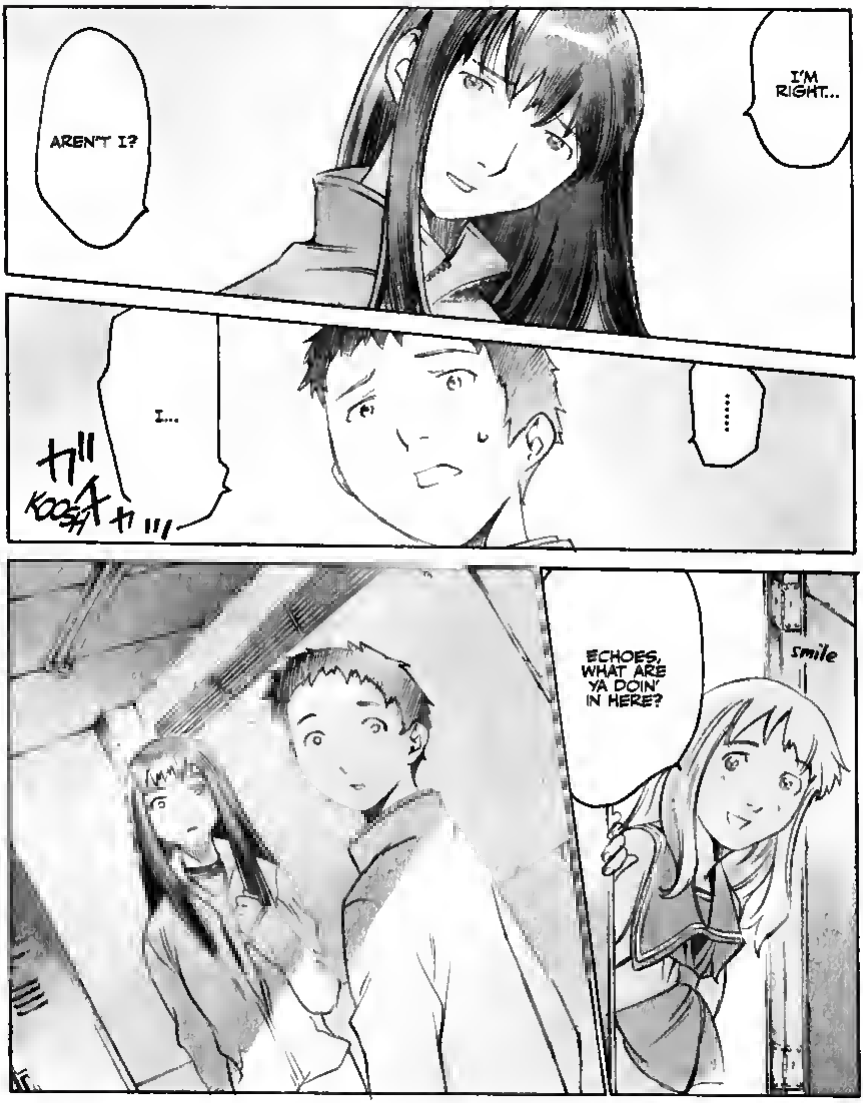
第17話
Chapter Seventeen

IF SHE'S FIGURED SOME-THING OUT...
DON'T YOU GET IT?! WE CAN'T AFFORD TO KILL ANYONE ELSE FROM THIS SCHOOL!
NO ONE CAN SUSPECT THAT IT'S A STUDENT HERE!
THEN SHE NEEDS TO DIE.
.....
YOU WON'T ALLOW ME TO EAT KIRIMA NAGI?
AND WE DO IT NOW.
NOT SURE YET.
WE NEED TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH SHE KNOWS.

COME ON!
PLEASE?
I WON'T LEAVE ANY EVIDENCE BEHIND! BESIDES, SHE'S CRAZY! NOBODY'LL EVEN NOTICE WHEN SHE VANISHES.
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD? SHE'S LOADED.
SHE DISAPPEARS AND IT WON'T BE PUT DOWN AS A RUNAWAY.
IS THAT...
...THE ONLY REASON?
EH?

WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT?
IS THAT THE ONLY REASON YOU DON'T WANT HER DEAD?
THERE'S ANOTHER REASON, ISN'T THERE?
.....
WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?
YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH HER, AREN'T YOU?
SAOTOME-KUN...


I'M RIGHT...
AREN'T I?
.....
I...
ECHOES, WHAT ARE YA DOIN' IN HERE?
smile

UH, ME? NAH, MY NAME'S NOT IMPORTANT.
SHAKE SHAKE
AH!
HEY, Y-YOU'RE--!
UH...OOPS. SORRY, MY MISTAKE!
SORRY!!
UH, SORRY AGAIN.
YOU TWO JUST HAVE FUN NOW!
UM, TAKE YOUR TIME!
BYE NOW!
RU
RUUH
RUUH
RUUH
RUUH

HIIIISSSSS
WHOOFH
N-NOOO!

GRAAAACKK
!

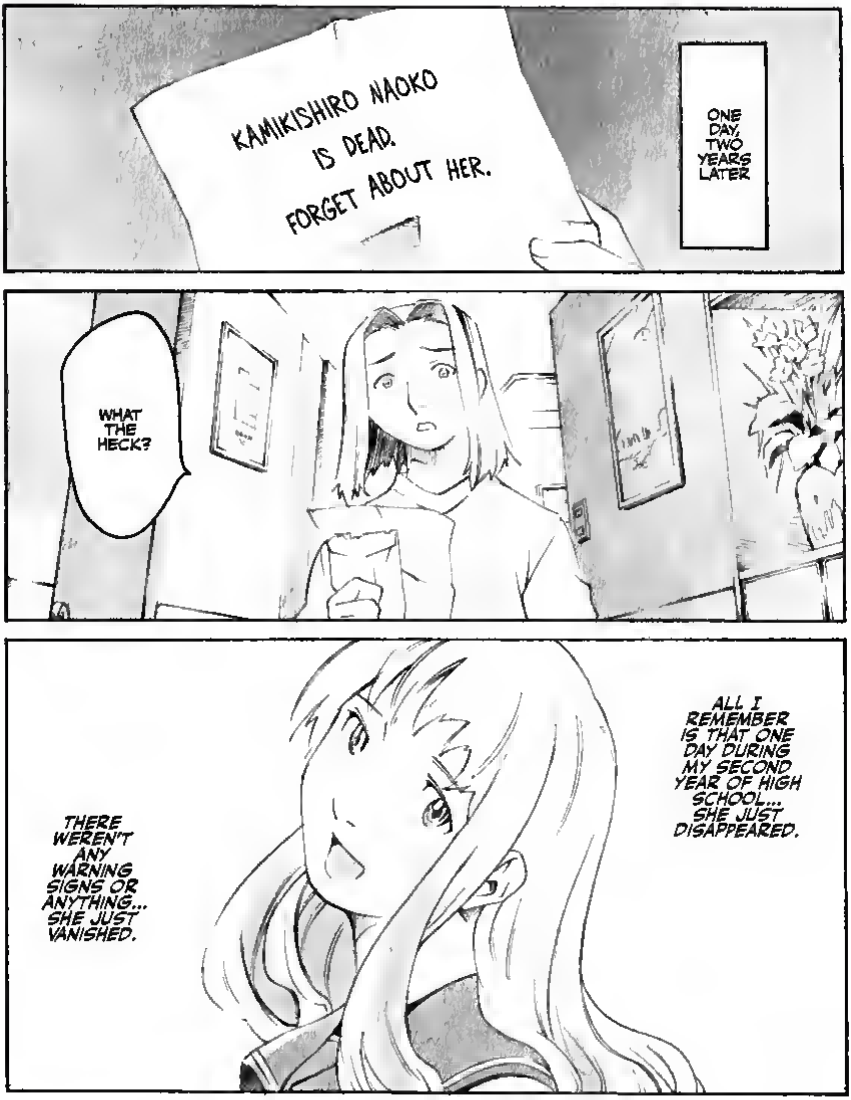
THWUMP
DRIP
DRIP
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINKING?!!
I JUST TOLD YOU NOT TO KILL ANYONE!!!
UH, HEY..
WHA- WHAT'S WRONG?

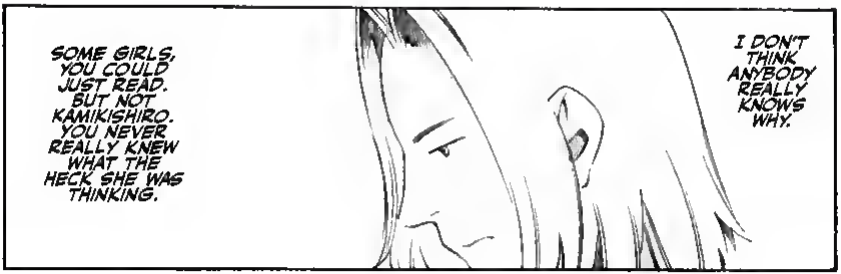
HE'S MY ORIGINAL!
HE'S THE OTHER OVER-EVOLVED MAN!
OKAY, WHO THE HELL IS ECHOES?!
SHIT! SHIT! SHIT!!
HOW DID ECHOES CATCH UP WITH ME?
OKAY, JUST CALM DOWN!
YOU CAN EXPLAIN IT ALL LATER.
FIRST THINGS FIRST... WE'VE GOT TO GET RID OF THIS BODY.

GRIN
DAMN, IT'S KAMIKISHIRO NAOKO.
SHE WAS ONE OF THE PRECIOUS FEW FRIENDS NAGI HAD. BUT WHY WAS NAGI'S FRIEND...?
WAS IT JUST A COINCI-DENCE? NO... IT CAN'T BE...
EH...?
DON'T WORRY, MY LOVELY MANTICORE. WE STILL HAVE THE ADVANTAGE.

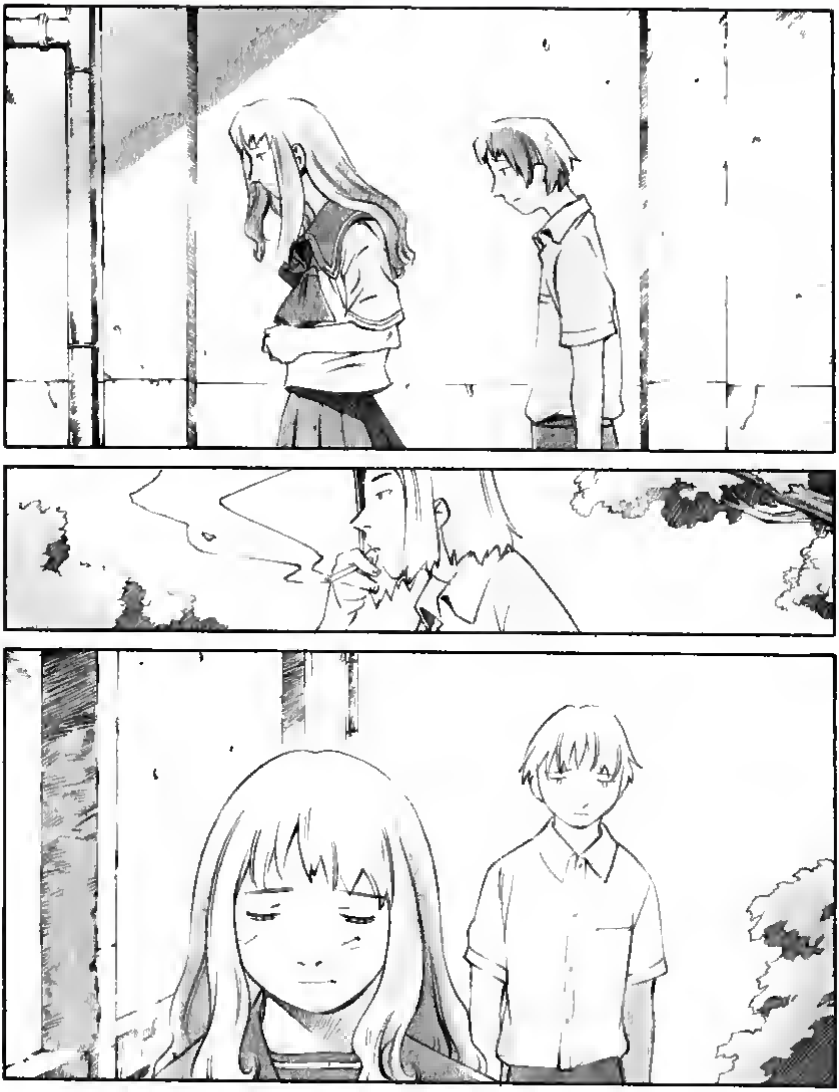
SLLP
SLLP
SLLP
SLP
SLP

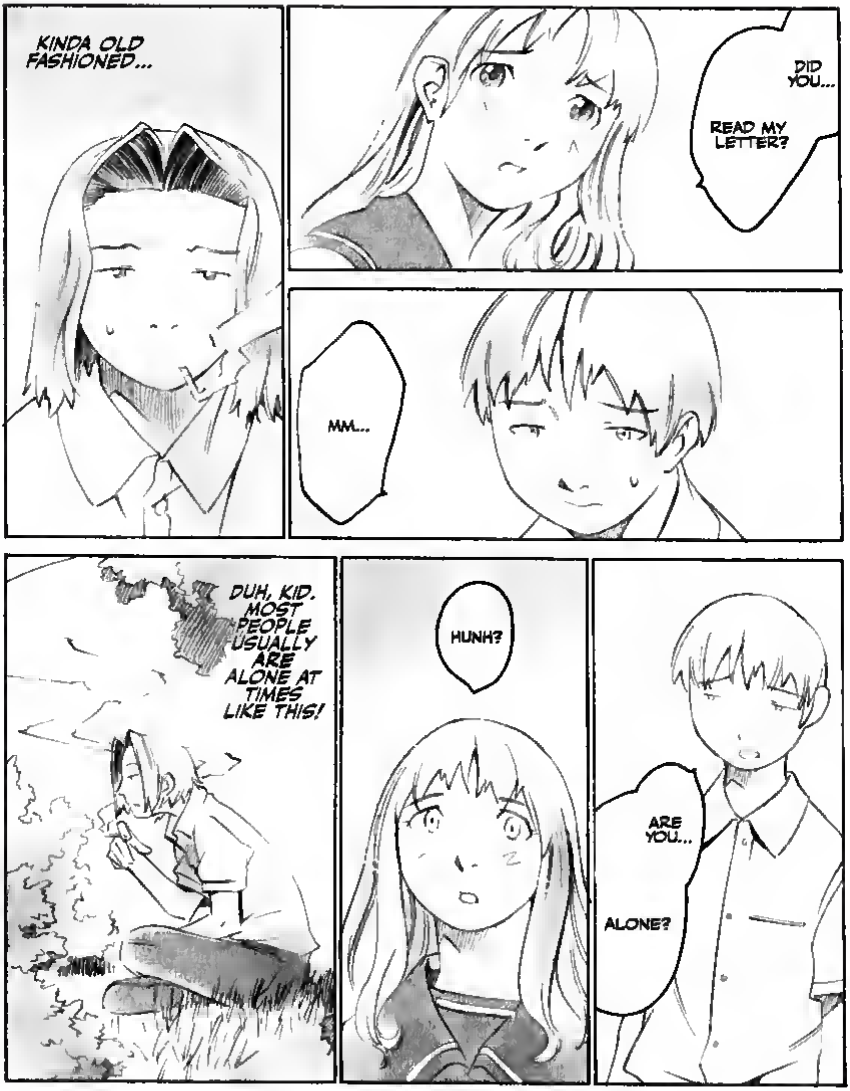
I PROMISE YOU'LL GET THROUGH THIS...I PROMISE.
SLRP
SLLP
SLRP
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO ME.


KAMIKISHIRO NAOKO
IS DEAD.
FORGET ABOUT HER.
ONE DAY, TWO YEARS LATER
WHAT THE HECK?
ALL I REMEMBER IS THAT ONE DAY DURING MY SECOND YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL... SHE JUST DISAPPEARED.
THERE WEREN'T ANY WARNING SIGNS OR ANYTHING... SHE JUST VANISHED.

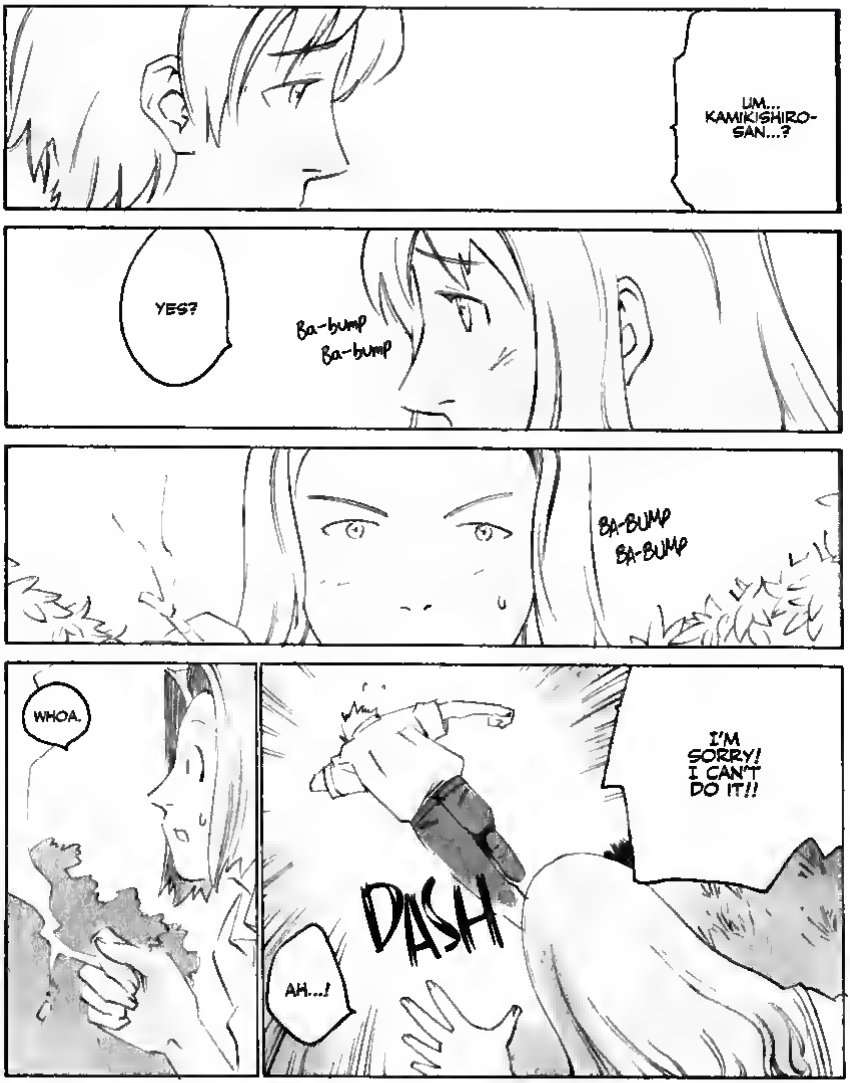

SOME GIRLS, YOU COULD JUST READ. BUT NOT KAMIKISHIRO. YOU NEVER REALLY KNEW WHAT THE HECK SHE WAS THINKING.
I DON'T THINK ANYBODY REALLY KNOWS WHY.

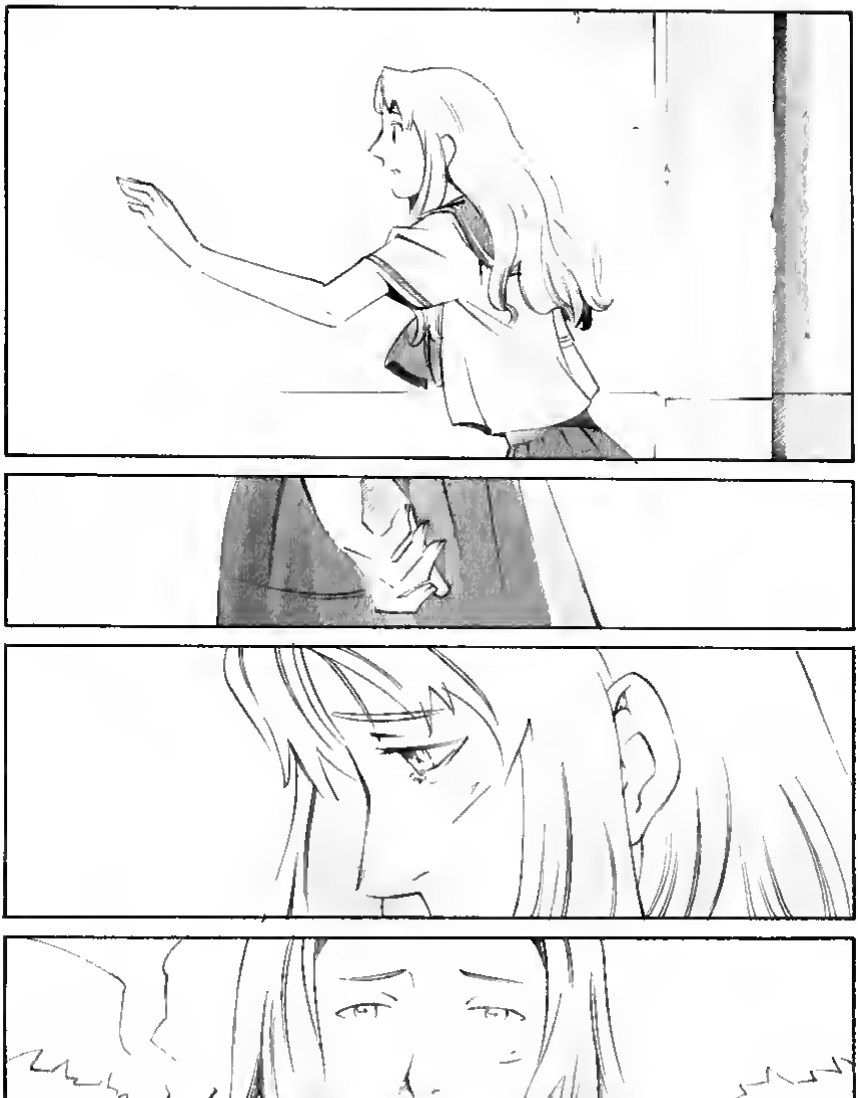
STP
STP
FF

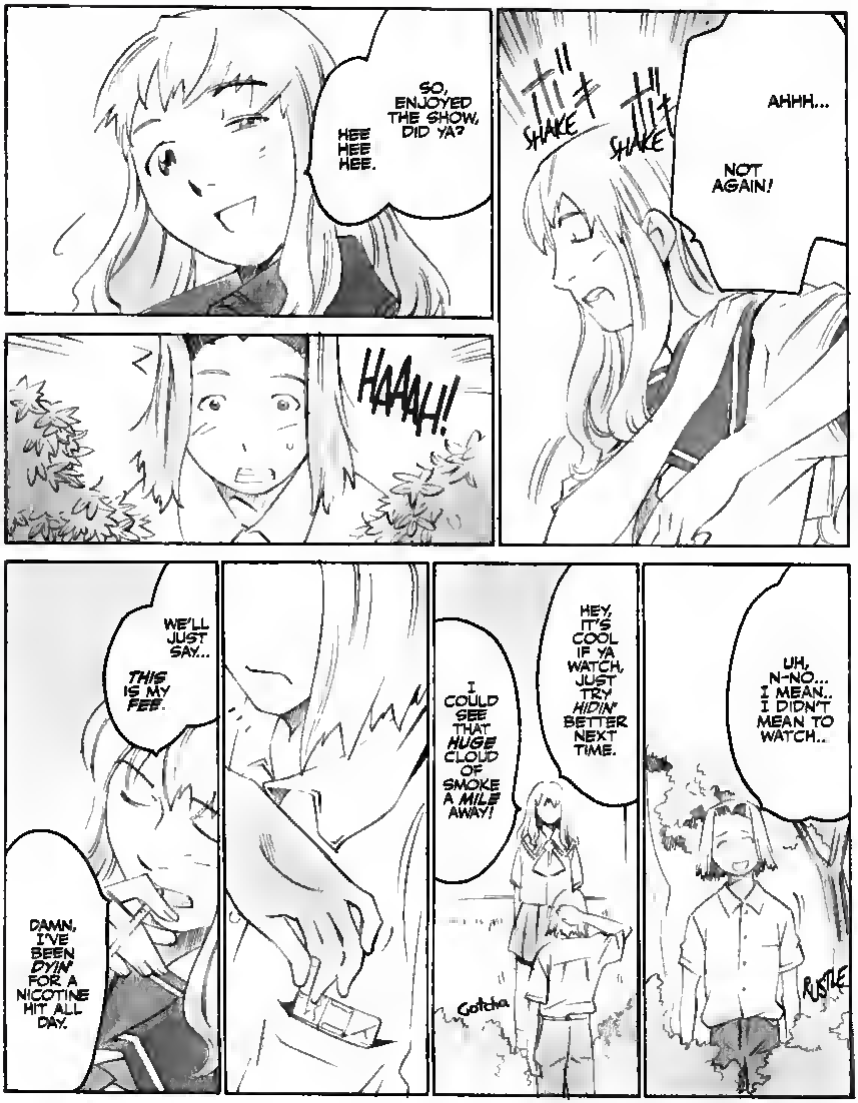


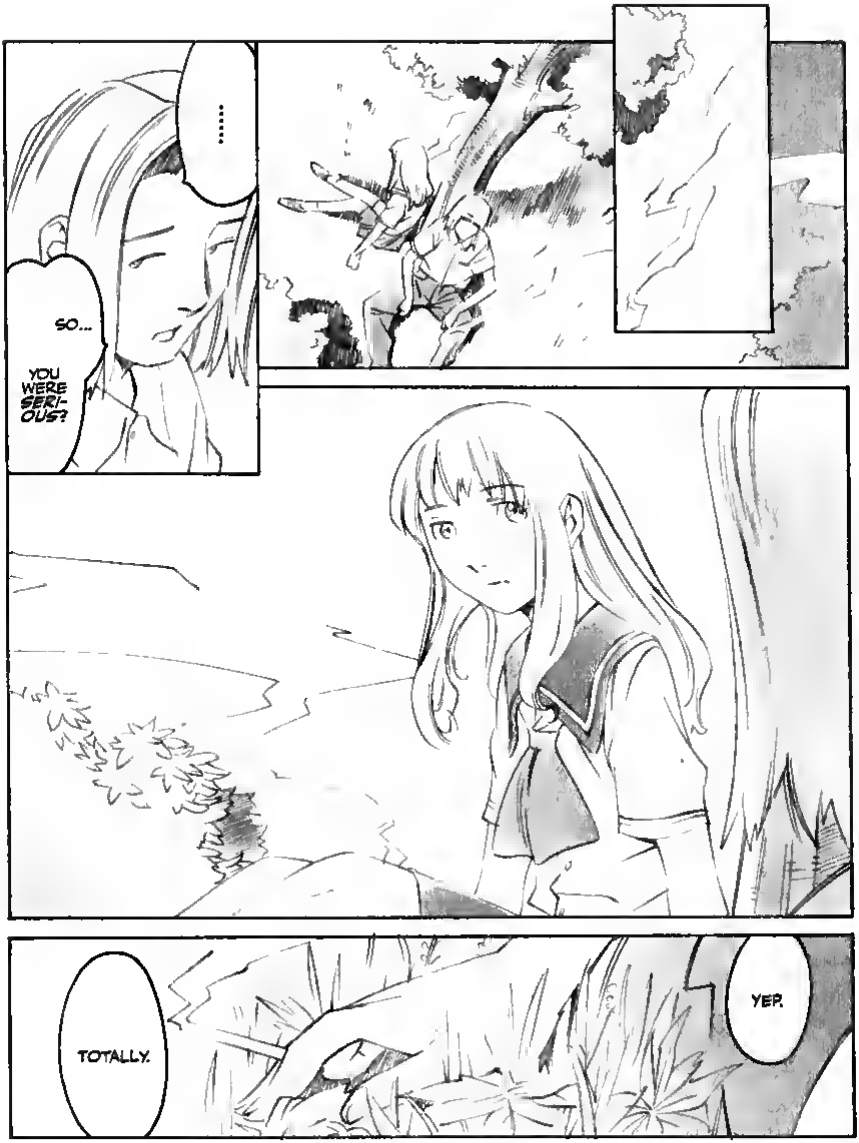

KINDA OLD FASHIONED...
DID YOU... READ MY LETTER?
MM...
DUH, KID. MOST PEOPLE USUALLY ARE ALONE AT TIMES LIKE THIS!
HUNH?
ARE YOU... ALONE?

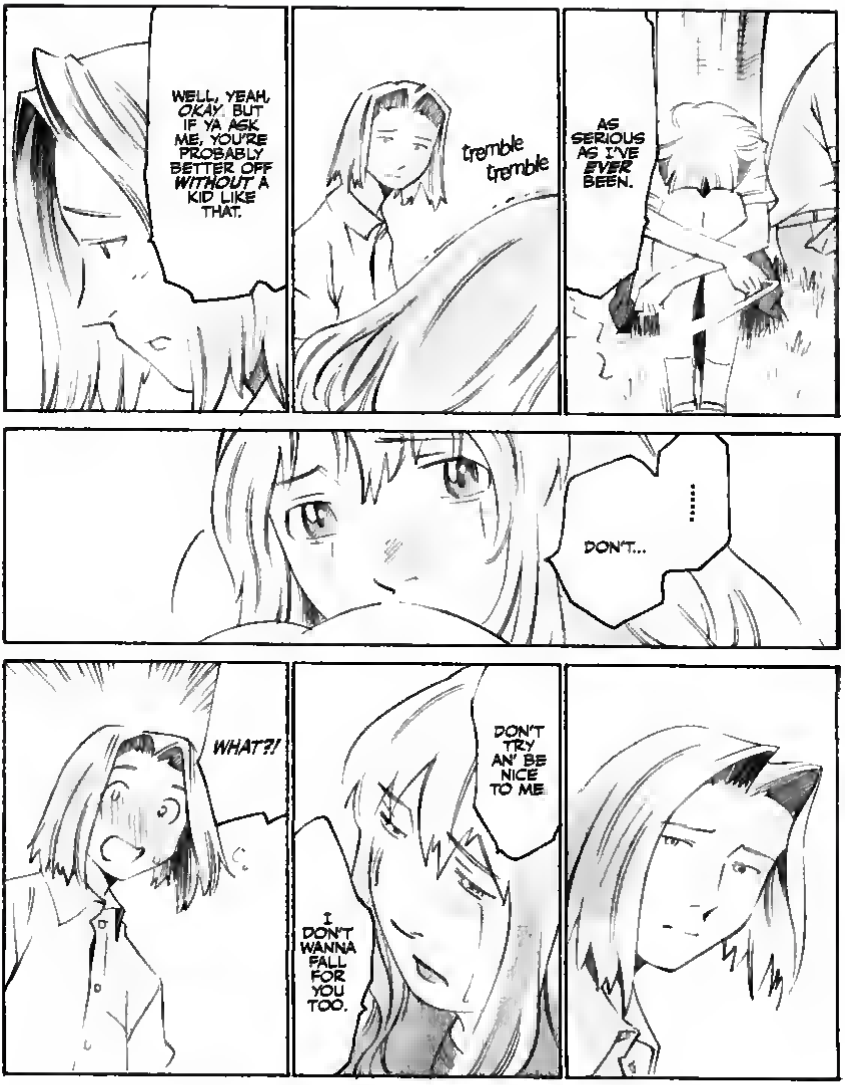
WHOA! YOU'VE GOT ME PEGGED ALL WRONG!
SO... YOU'RE NOT GONNA BEAT ME UP?
WELL, SHE IS TWO YEARS OLDER THAN HIM... KINDA MAKES SENSE.
WHA?! THE KID THOUGHT IT WAS SOME KINDA SET-UP?!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, KID!
I'D BE HESITANT TOO, IF A PRETTY SENIOR WAS ASKIN' OUT A FRESH-MEN.
BLUSH
YOU KNOW...
THEN WHAT IS IT?

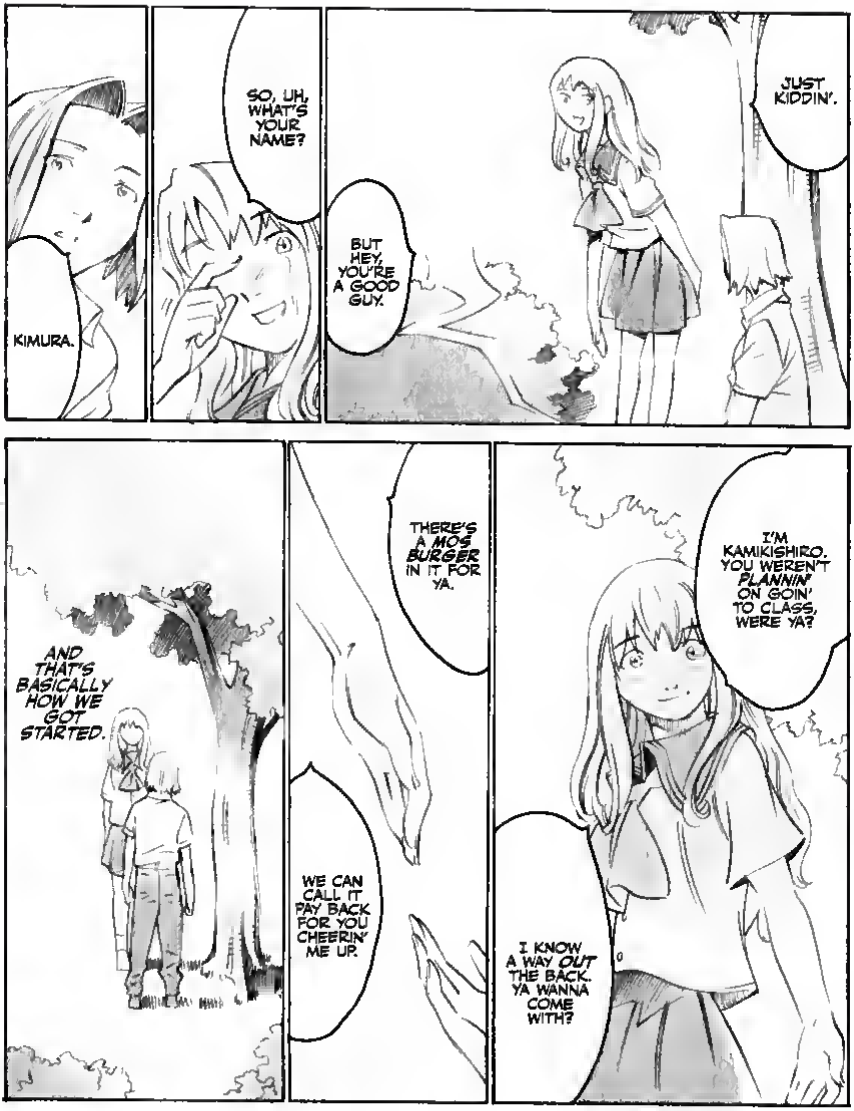

UM... KAMIKISHIRO-SAN...?
YES?
Ba-bump Ba-bump
BA-BUMP BA-BUMP
WHOA.
I'M SORRY! I CAN'T DO IT!!
DASH
AH...!




SO, ENJOYED THE SHOW, DID YA?
HEE HEE HEE.
AHHH...
NOT AGAIN!
SHAKE
SHAKE
HAAAH!
UH, N-NO... I MEAN.. I DIDN'T MEAN TO WATCH..
RUSTLE
HEY, IT'S COOL IF YA WATCH, JUST TRY HIDIN' BETTER NEXT TIME.
I COULD SEE THAT HUGE CLOUD OF SMOKE A MILE AWAY!
Gotcha
WE'LL JUST SAY... THIS IS MY FEE.
DAMN, I'VE BEEN DYIN' FOR A NICOTINE HIT ALL DAY.


.....
SO...
YOU WERE SERI-OUS?
YEP.
TOTALLY.


WELL, YEAH, *OKAY*. BUT IF YA ASK ME, YOU'RE PROBABLY BETTER OFF *WITHOUT* A KID LIKE THAT.
tremble tremble
AS SERIOUS AS I'VE *EVER* BEEN.
.....
DON'T...
WHAT?!
I DON'T WANNA FALL FOR YOU TOO.
DON'T TRY AN' BE NICE TO ME.


KIMURA.
SO, UH, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
BUT HEY, YOU'RE A GOOD GUY.
JUST KIDDIN'.
I'M KAMIKISHIRO. YOU WEREN'T *PLANNIN'* ON GOIN' TO CLASS, WERE YA?
I KNOW A WAY *OUT* THE BACK. YA WANNA COME WITH?
THERE'S A *MOS BURGER* IN IT FOR YA.
WE CAN CALL IT PAY BACK FOR YOU CHEERIN' ME UP.
AND THAT'S BASICALLY HOW WE GOT STARTED.

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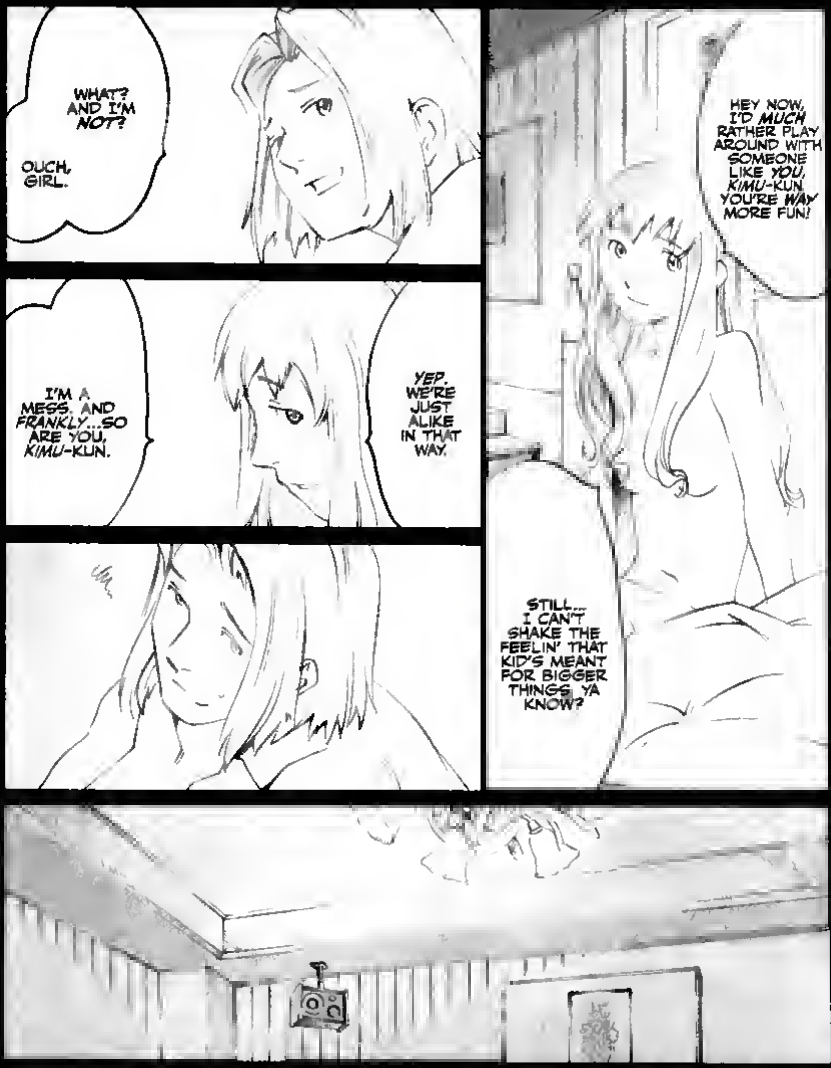
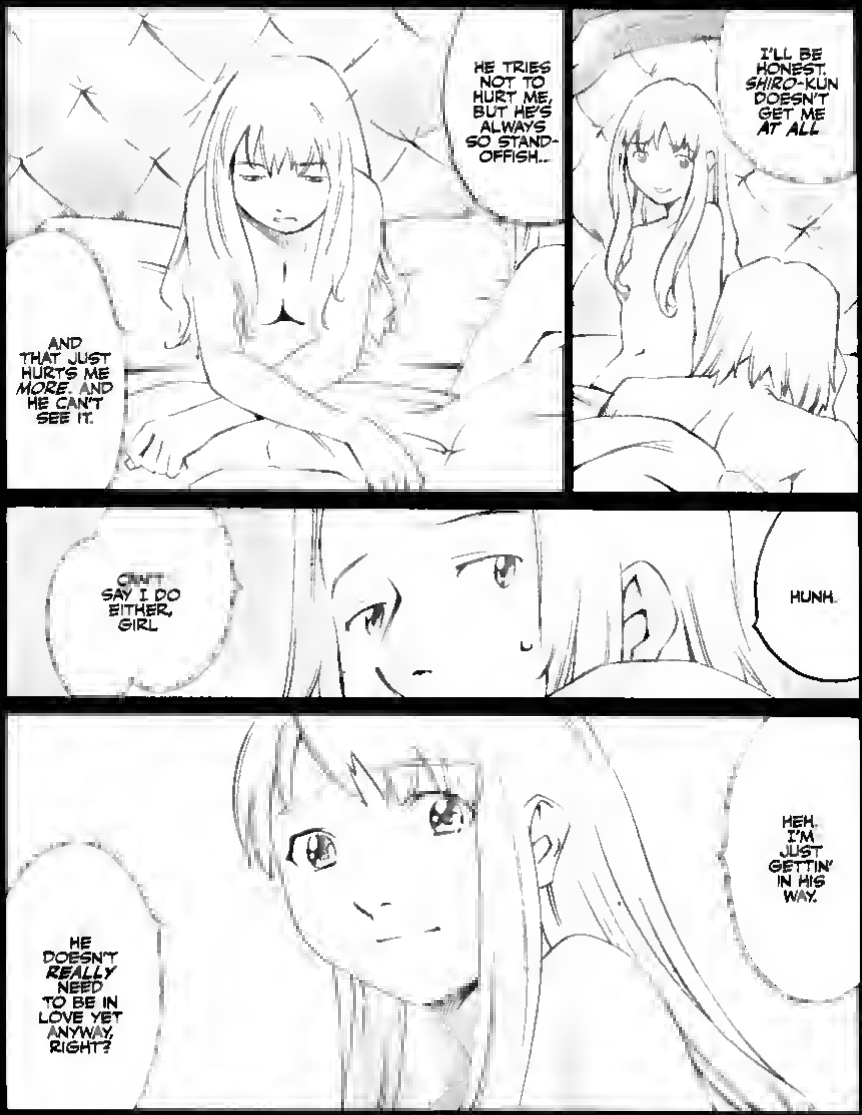
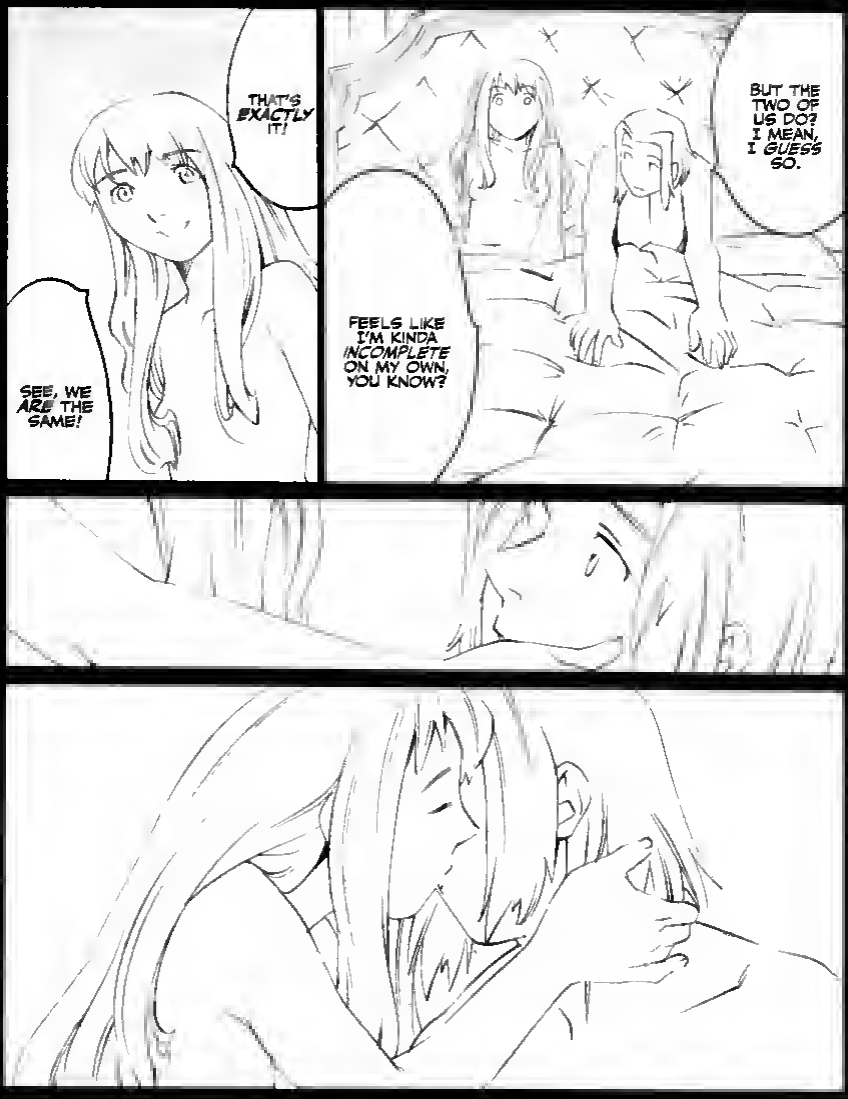
第18話
Chapter Eighteen

I JUST DON'T GET IT.
WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THAT KID?
WELL, YOU SEE... HE'S AN ARCHER.
SAW HIM AT A CONTEST ONCE.
OOO, HIS EYES GAVE ME GOOSE-BUMPS!
WHEN HE STARED AT THAT TINY LITTLE TARGET...
EVENTUALLY, KAMIKISHIRO DID TALK THAT FIRST YEAR KID, TANAKA SHIRO, INTO GOING OUT WITH HER.
AND THEN HE'D LET THE ARROW FLY, AND SWOOSH...!
UH... SOUNDS KINDA SHALLOW...


HEY NOW, I'D *MUCH* RATHER PLAY AROUND WITH SOMEBONE LIKE *YOU*, *KIMU*-KUN. YOU'RE *WAY* MORE FUN!
STILL... I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELIN' THAT KID'S MEANT FOR BIGGER THINGS, YA KNOW?
YEP, WE'RE JUST ALIKE IN THAT WAY.
I'M A MESS. AND *FRANKLY*...SO ARE YOU, *KIMU*-KUN.
WHAT? AND I'M *NOT*?
OUCH, GIRL.

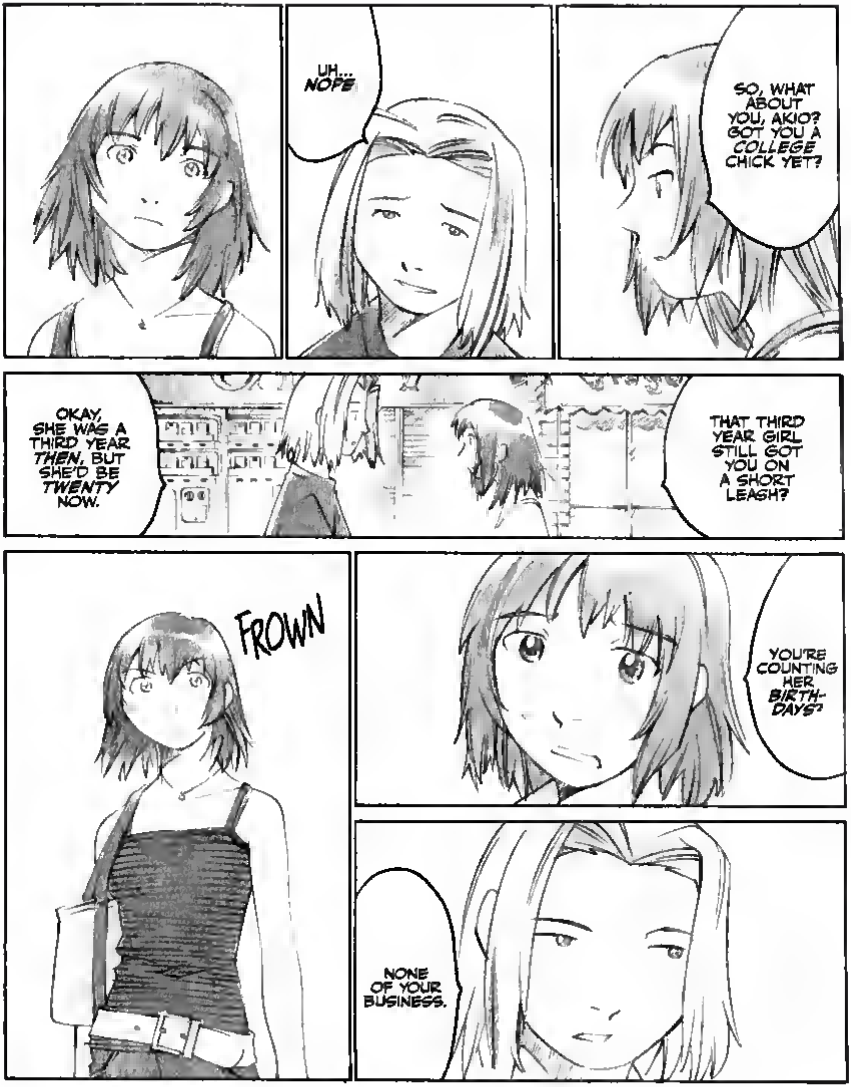

I'LL BE HONEST. SHIRO-KUN DOESN'T GET ME AT ALL
HE TRIES NOT TO HURT ME, BUT HE'S ALWAYS SO STAND-OFFISH...
AND THAT JUST HURTS ME MORE. AND HE CAN'T SEE IT.
HUNH.
CAN'T SAY I DO EITHER, GIRL
HEH. I'M JUST GETTIN' IN HIS WAY.
HE DOESN'T REALLY NEED TO BE IN LOVE YET ANYWAY, RIGHT?


SEE, WE ARE THE SAME!
THAT'S EXACTLY IT!
FEELS LIKE I'M KINDA INCOMPLETE ON MY OWN, YOU KNOW?
BUT THE TWO OF US DO? I MEAN, I GUESS SO.

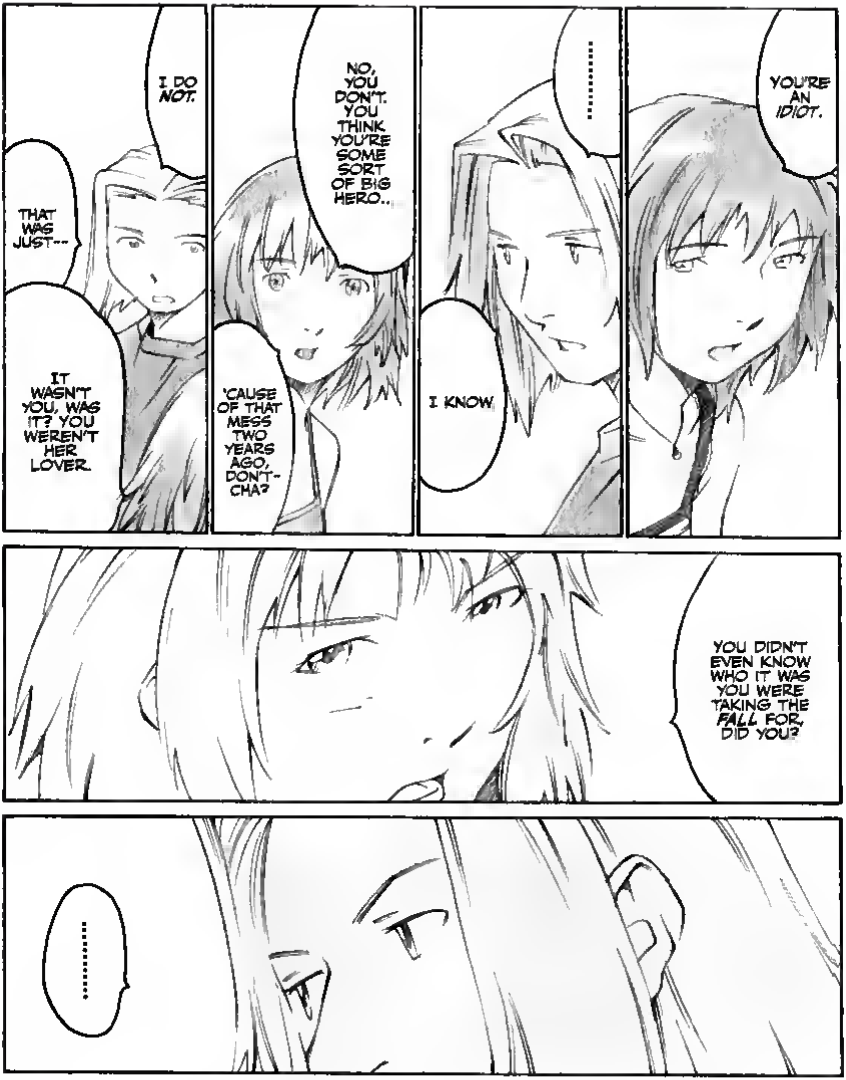
HMM?
.....
YOU... YOU DO THIS WITH TANAKA?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WHY YOU LITTLE...!
WAH!

I WAS PRETTY SURE THE LETTER WAS JUST SOME PRANK, BUT IT BUGGED THE HELL OUT OF ME ENOUGH THAT I SKIPPED CLASS AND HEADED BACK TO WHERE I'D GONE TO HIGH SCHOOL.
ONE DAY, TWO YEARS LATER
NOTHIN' WHATCHA DOING BACK HERE?
EH, NO REASON. YOU?
Hey!
HEY, WHAT'S UP?
AH! AKIO! OVER HERE!
FWIP FWIP

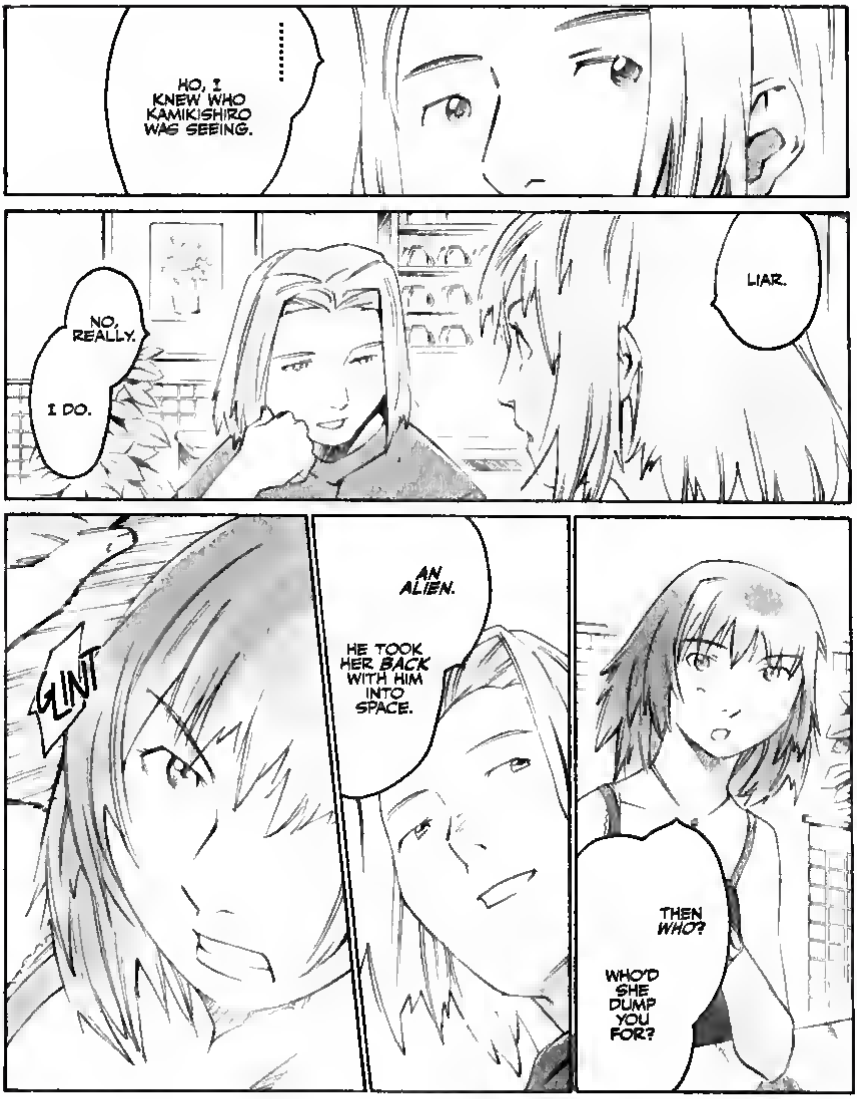
ACK! I KNOW!!
BUT LOOK AT YOU! YOU FORGOT ALL ABOUT US!!
ON MY WAY TO CRAM SCHOOL AS WE SPEAK.
YOU DIDN'T HEAR? I FAILED MY EXAMS.
I'M A RONIN.
THAT SUCKS.
OH. DAMN.
FIGHTING WITH THAT DESIGNER BOYFRIEND OF YOURS?
EH HEH. YOU SOUND BITTER.
NOT HIM! HE STUDIES MORE THAN ME!
TRYING TO GET SOME DUMB AWARD OR SOME-THIN'!
EH, HE'S PROBABLY JUST TRYING NOT TO DISTURB YOU WHEN YOU'RE STUDYING.
UGH, DO NOT EVEN TALK TO ME ABOUT HIM.
HE NEVER EVEN CALLS ANY-MORE!


UH... NOPE
SO, WHAT ABOUT YOU, AKIO? GOT YOU A COLLEGE CHICK YET?
OKAY, SHE WAS A THIRD YEAR THEN, BUT SHE'D BE TWENTY NOW.
THAT THIRD YEAR GIRL STILL GOT YOU ON A SHORT LEASH?
FROWN
YOU'RE COUNTING HER BIRTH-DAYS?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

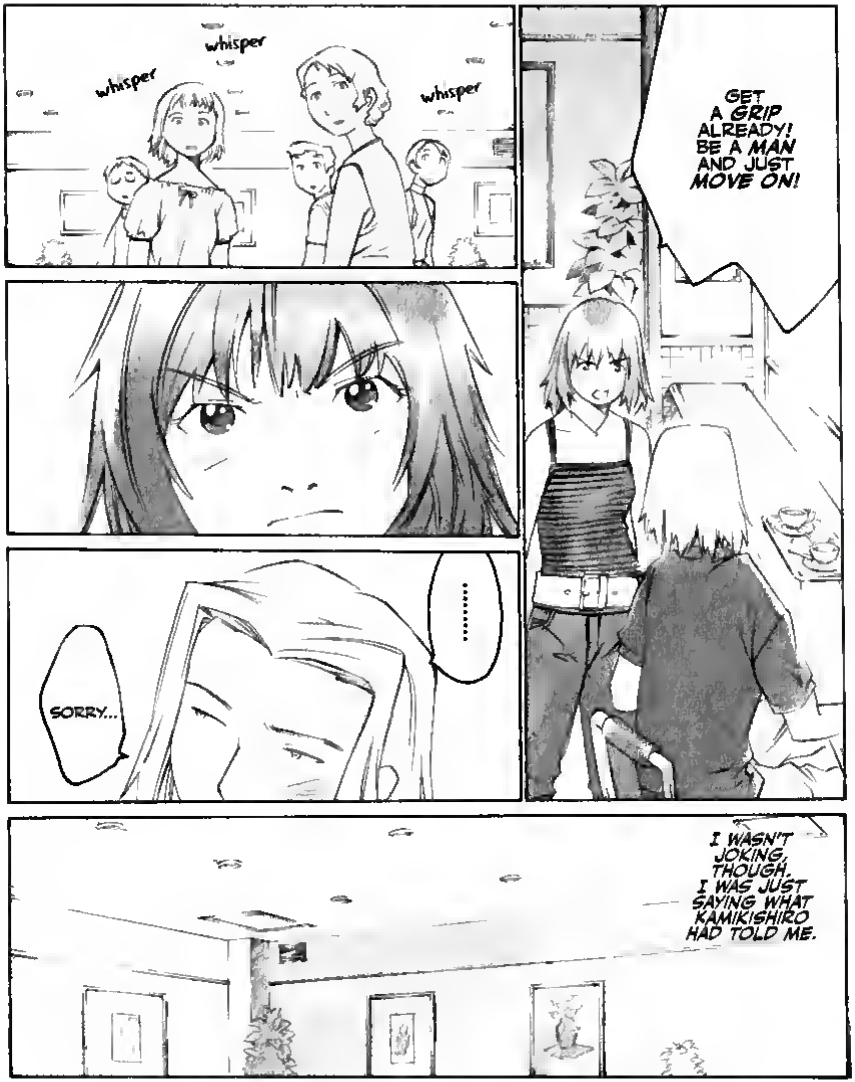
WH-WHAT?
JUST COME WITH ME! WE ARE HAVING TEA.
GRAB
HEY, NOW!
EH, SCREW IT. I'M GONNA FAIL AGAIN ANYWAY.
WHAT ABOUT CRAM SCHOOL?


YOU'RE AN IDIOT.
.....
I KNOW.
NO, YOU DON'T. YOU THINK YOU'RE SOME SORT OF BIG HERO..
'CAUSE OF THAT MESS TWO YEARS AGO, DON'T-CHA?
I DO NOT.
THAT WAS JUST---
IT WASN'T YOU, WAS IT? YOU WEREN'T HER LOVER.
YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHO IT WAS YOU WERE TAKING THE FALL FOR, DID YOU?
.....

WITH KAMIKISHIRO STILL MISSING, THE SCHOOL WAS PREPARING TO OUTRIGHT EXPEL HER. THAT'S WHEN I DID SOMETHING STUPID.
WAS ME! I DID IT!
KOOSH
AT FIRST THEY THOUGHT IT WAS A DRIFTER, BUT THEN THEY FOUND ONE OF KAMIKISHIRO'S EARRINGS AND IT TURNED INTO THIS HUGE SCANDAL.
BACK TWO YEARS AGO, AFTER KAMIKISHIRO HAD VANISHED, THEY DISCOVERED THAT SOMEONE HAD BEEN LIVING IN THE STORAGE ROOM UNDER THE GYM.
THE STAFF DIDN'T BELIEVE ME, BUT MY CLASSMATES MADE A FUSS, AND JUST TO CALM THINGS DOWN THEY SUSPENDED BOTH ME AND KAMIKISHIRO.
SHE DIDN'T BRING ANY *OUTSIDERS* INTO THE SCHOOL! IT WAS JUST *US*! PLEASE, *DON'T* EXPEL HER!
Thank


HO, I KNEW WHO KAMIKISHIRO WAS SEEING.
.....
LIAR.
NO, REALLY.
I DO.
AN ALIEN.
HE TOOK HER *BACK* WITH HIM INTO SPACE.
GLINT
THEN *WHO*?
WHO'D SHE DUMP YOU FOR?

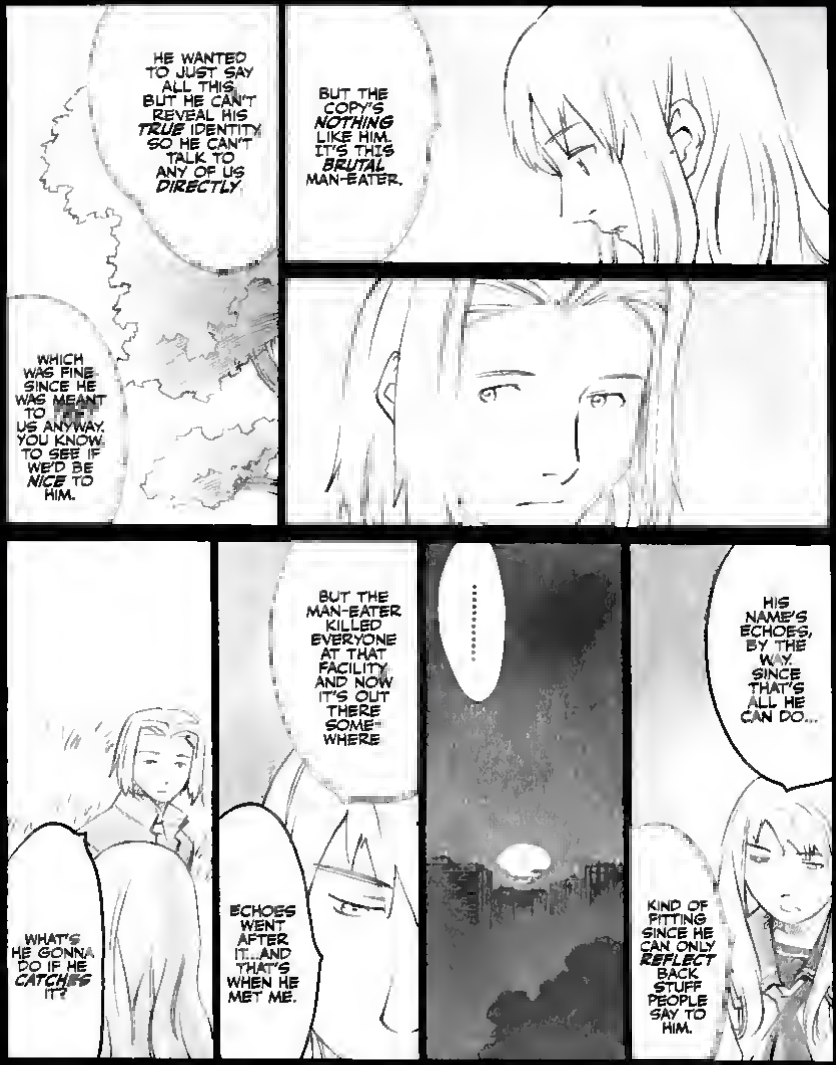
SLAP

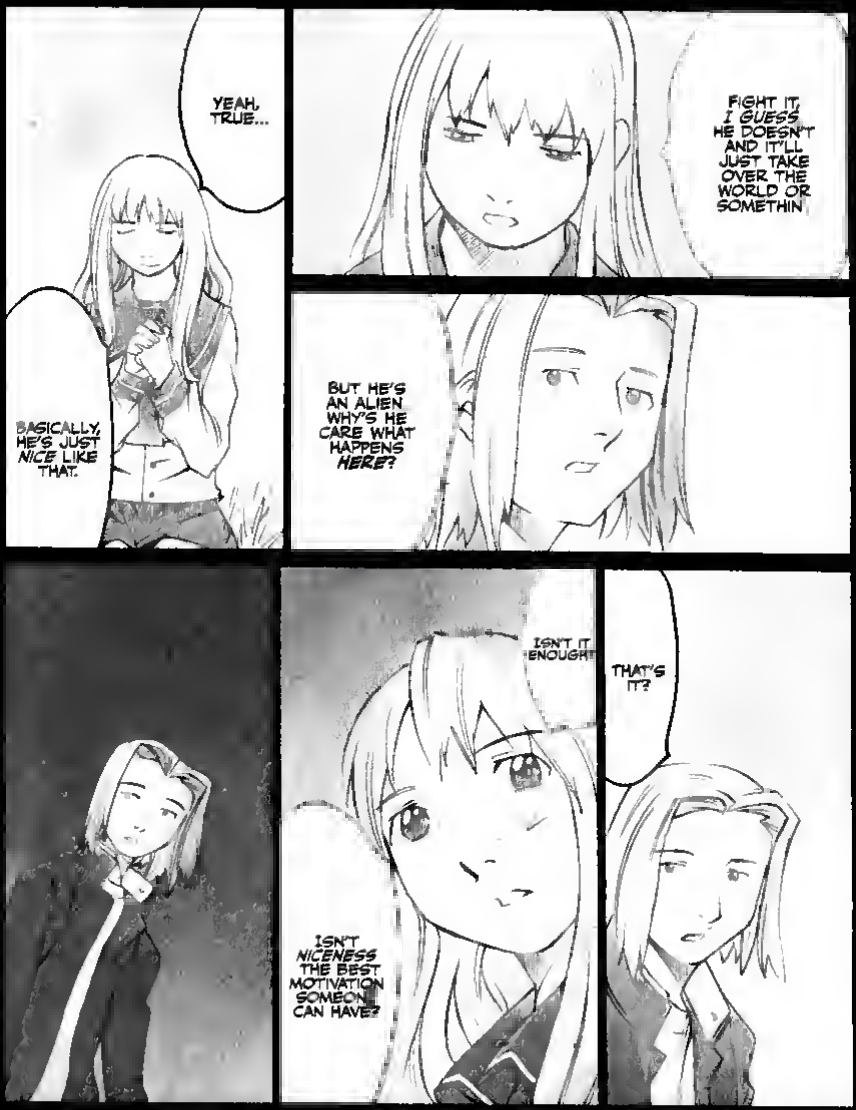

whisper
whisper
whisper
GET A GRIP ALREADY! BE A MAN AND JUST MOVE ON!
.....
SORRY...
I WASN'T JOKING, THOUGH. I WAS JUST SAYING WHAT KAMIKISHIRO HAD TOLD ME.

KIMU-KUN...
DO YOU THINK HUMAN EXISTENCE IS REALLY JUSTIFIED?
NOOOPE.
DANG...
NEITHER DO I.

SO, WHAT BROUGHT ON THAT PHILO-SOPHICAL QUESTION?
YEAH... MAYBE.
HUMANS JUST AREN'T THAT GREAT, YOU KNOW?
UH, YEAH... KINDA. BUT UH, LET'S PUT THAT ASIDE FOR NOW, OKAY?
O-I... I JUST MET THIS GUY, BUT...
JEEZ, YOU IN LOVE AGAIN?
What about Tsuruko?

HE'S...
HE'S FROM OUTER SPACE.
IT'S, LIKE, IN SPACE THERE'S THIS BIG *CONSCIOUSNESS*, AND IT SENT HIM HERE TO, YOU KNOW, *TEST* MANKIND. BUT HIS ACTUAL BODY IS STILL IN SPACE, AND HIS EARTH-BOUND BODY CAN TURN INTO, LIKE, *ANYTHING*! SO, WHEN HE LANDED ON EARTH, HE HAD TO DISGUISE HIMSELF LIKE A HUMAN, BUT HE DIDN'T MANAGE TO GET IT *JUST* RIGHT.
SEE, HE'S EVOLVED LIKE A LITTLE *TOO* MUCH. HE'S WAY MORE POWERFUL THAN US MODERN HUMANS.
SO, HIS TRUE NATURE CAME OUT, AND THE GOVERNMENT OR SOMETHING CAPTURED HIM AND, LIKE, *CLONED* HIM.
AND APPARENTLY SPACE IS JUST SO *BIG* THAT IT'S HARD TO GET THE YEAR RIGHT.


HE WANTED TO JUST SAY ALL THIS, BUT HE CAN'T REVEAL HIS TRUE IDENTITY, SO HE CAN'T TALK TO ANY OF US DIRECTLY.
WHICH WAS FINE, SINCE HE WAS MEANT TO TEST US ANYWAY, YOU KNOW, TO SEE IF WE'D BE NICE TO HIM.
BUT THE COPY'S NOTHING LIKE HIM. IT'S THIS BRUTAL MAN-EATER.
BUT THE MAN-EATER KILLED EVERYONE AT THAT FACILITY, AND NOW IT'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE
ECHOES WENT AFTER IT...AND THAT'S WHEN HE MET ME.
WHAT'S HE GONNA DO IF HE CATCHES IT?
.....
HIS NAME'S ECHOES, BY THE WAY. SINCE THAT'S ALL HE CAN DO...
KIND OF FITTING SINCE HE CAN ONLY REFLECT BACK STUFF PEOPLE SAY TO HIM.


YEAH, TRUE...
BASICALLY, HE'S JUST *NICE* LIKE THAT.
FIGHT IT, *I GUESS* HE DOESN'T AND IT'LL JUST TAKE OVER THE WORLD OR SOMETHIN'
BUT HE'S AN ALIEN WHY'S HE CARE WHAT HAPPENS *HERE*?
ISN'T IT ENOUGH?
THAT'S IT?
ISN'T *NICENESS* THE BEST MOTIVATION SOMEONE CAN HAVE?

SURE, HALF OF THIS IS JUST *ME* READING BETWEEN THE LINES. THE OTHER STUFF'S JUST *COMPLICATED* THOUGH.
SOMETHING ABOUT MAINTAINING THE BALANCE OF THIS PLANET OR SOMETHIN'.
BUT IF THAT WAS IT...
DON'T-CHA THINK THAT'S KINDA *SAD*?
AHEM
SO, UH, HOW THE HELL'D THIS ECHOES GUY EVEN *EXPLAIN* ALL OF THIS STUFF TO YA? I THOUGHT HE COULDN'T *TALK*?

EH... GOT ME THERE.
I CAN'T FOOL YOU! YOU'RE JUST TOO SMART! EH HEH HEH!
THAT'S ALL?
YEP. I WAS JUST KIDDIN' JUST A STUPID LITTLE FAIRY TALE.
.....
BUT IF ECHOES WINS, HE'LL PROBABLY GET TO GO BACK TO HIS HOME IN THE STARS.

WHERE IS HE NOW?
HIDING IN SCHOOL
SHHH! DON'T TELL ANYONE
HEH HEH!
DON'T WORRY... I WON'T.

WOW!
THE STARS ARE SO FAR AWAY
AND THAT'S THE LAST TIME I EVER SAW HER.
I HEARD SHE WAS IN CLASS UNTIL NOON THE NEXT DAY...
BUT I NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO MEET UP WITH HER.

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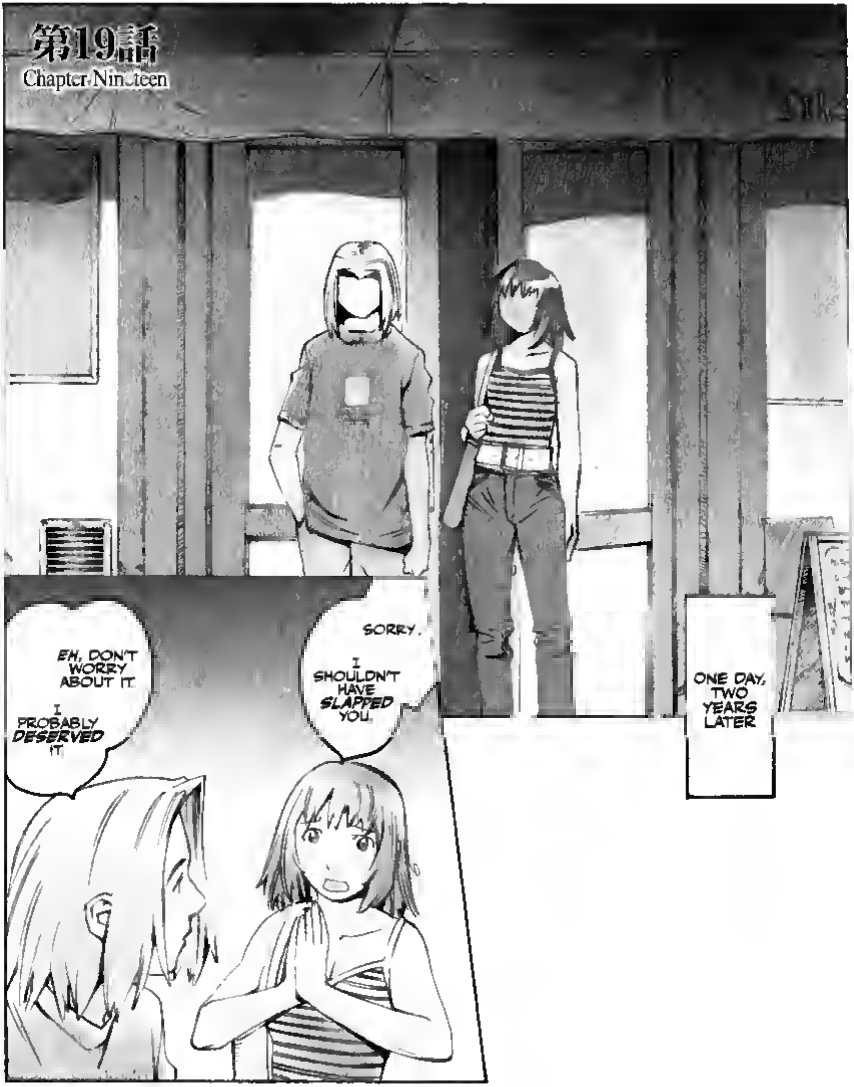
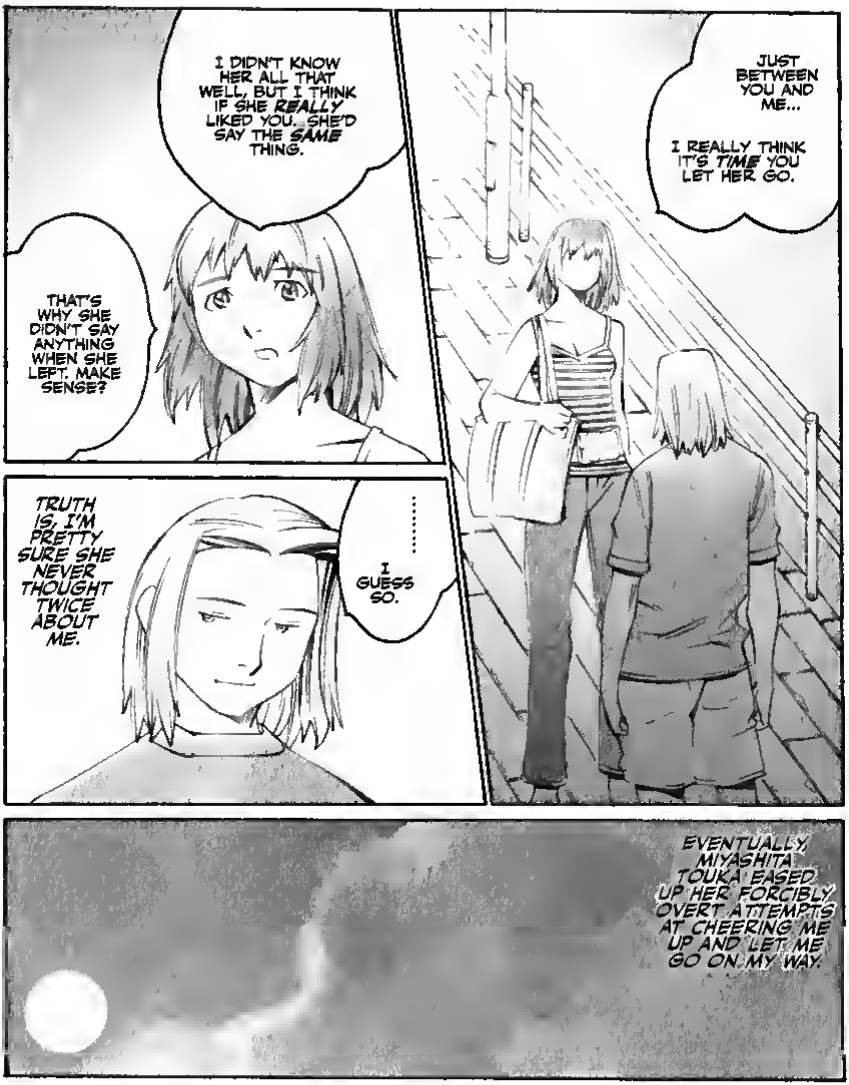
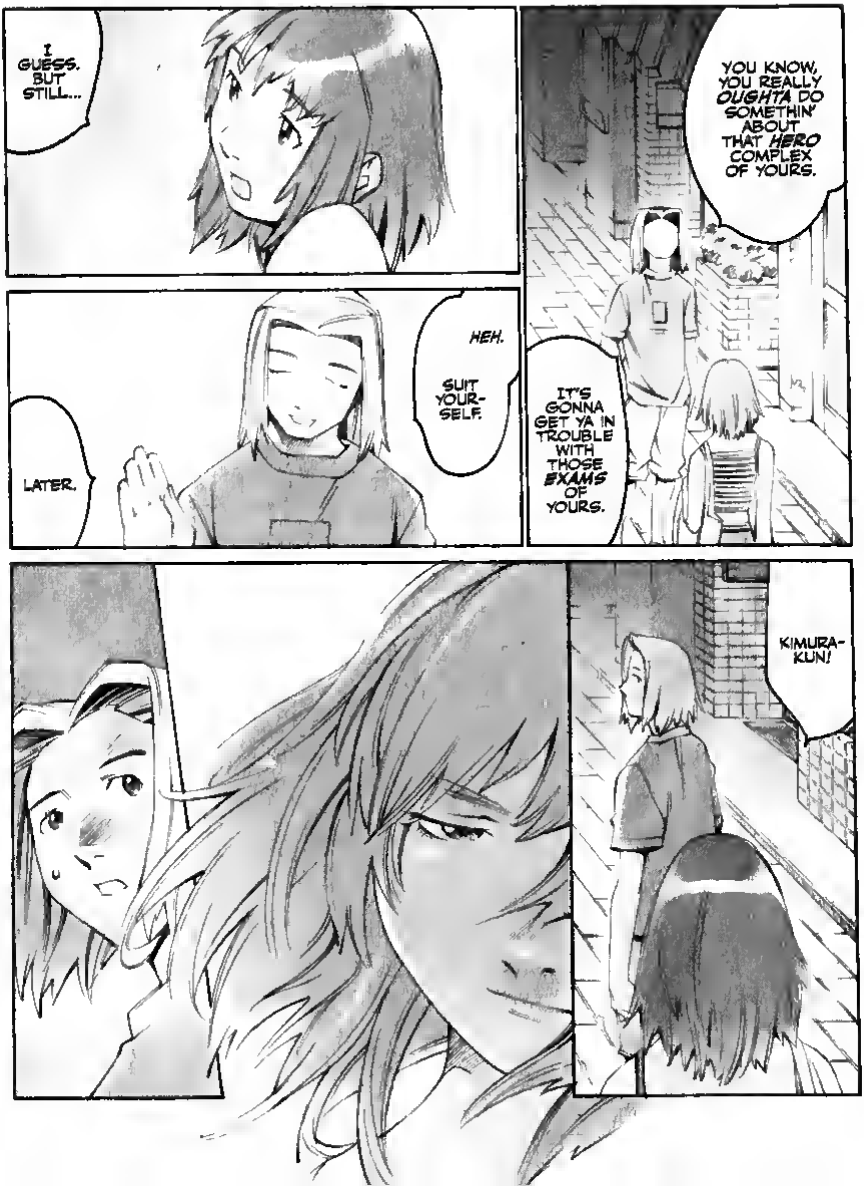
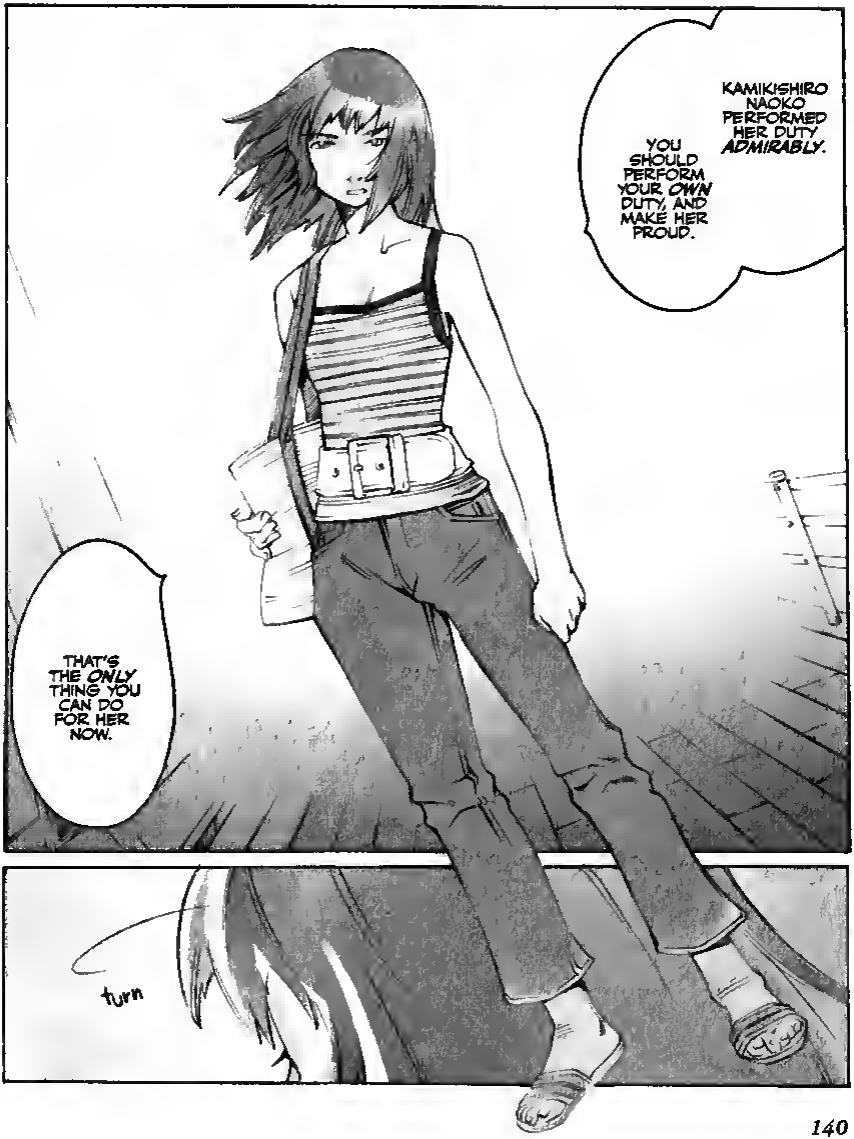
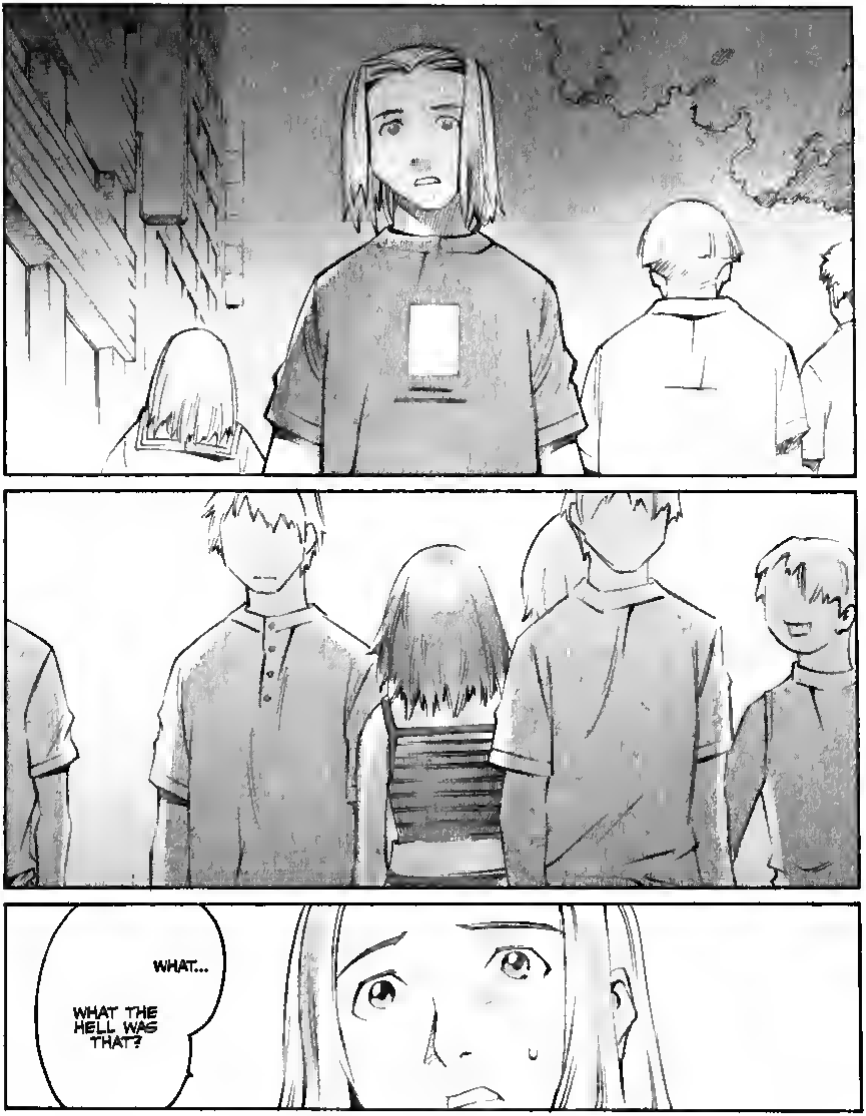
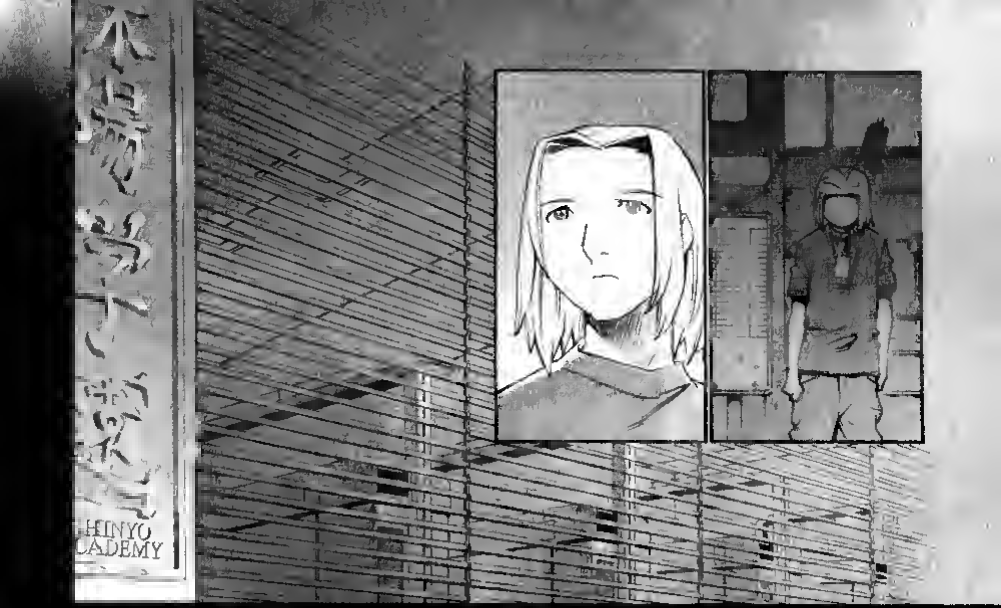

第19話
Chapter Nineteen
ONE DAY, TWO YEARS LATER
SORRY. I SHOULDN'T HAVE SLAPPED YOU.
EH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I PROBABLY DESERVED IT.


I DIDN'T KNOW HER ALL THAT WELL, BUT I THINK IF SHE *REALLY* LIKED YOU, SHE'D SAY THE *SAME* THING.
THAT'S WHY SHE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING WHEN SHE LEFT. MAKE SENSE?
JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME...
I REALLY THINK IT'S *TIME* YOU LET HER GO.
TRUTH IS, I'M PRETTY SURE SHE NEVER THOUGHT TWICE ABOUT ME.
I GUESS SO.
.....
EVENTUALLY, MIYASHITA TOUKA EASED UP HER FORCIBLY OVERT ATTEMPTS AT CHEERING ME UP AND LET ME GO ON MY WAY.


I GUESS. BUT STILL...
YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY *OUGHTA* DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT THAT *HERO* COMPLEX OF YOURS.
IT'S GONNA GET YA IN TROUBLE WITH THOSE *EXAMS* OF YOURS.
HEH. SUIT YOUR-SELF.
LATER.
KIMURA-KUN!

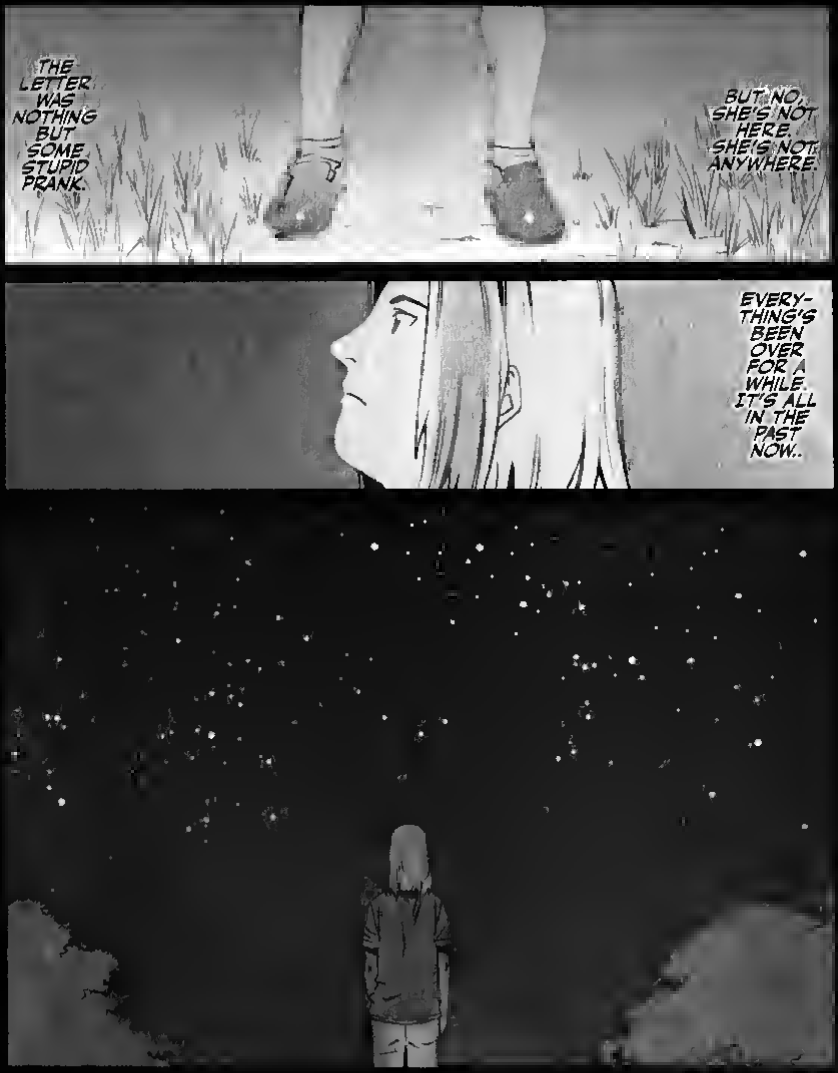

KAMIKISHIRO NAOKO PERFORMED HER DUTY *ADMIRABLY*.
YOU SHOULD PERFORM YOUR *OWN* DUTY, AND MAKE HER PROUD.
THAT'S THE *ONLY* THING YOU CAN DO FOR HER NOW.
turn


WHAT...
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?


HINYO
CADEMY

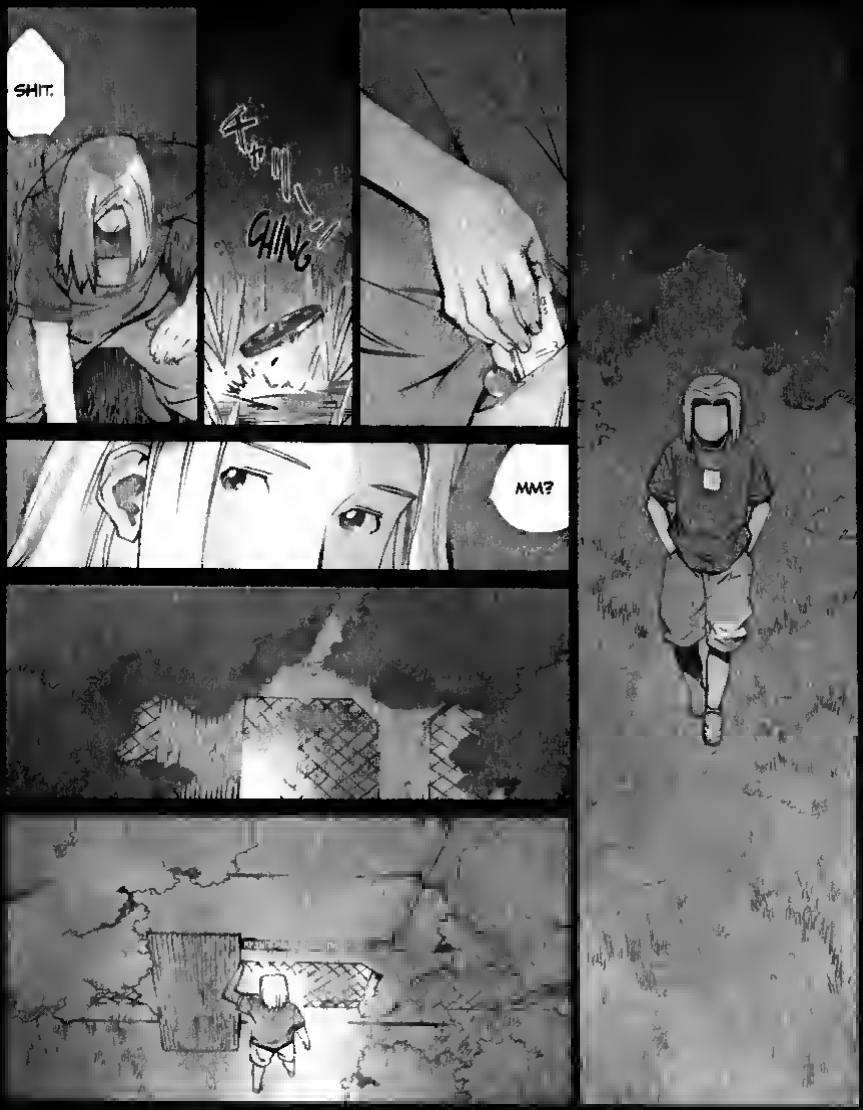
STILL, THIS SCHOOL IS THE ONLY CONNECTION I EVER HAD WITH KAMIKISHIRO.
COMING HERE'S NOT GONNA HELP ME FIND OUT 'BOUT THAT LETTER.
WHY DID I COME BACK TO THIS SCHOOL?

THERE WAS NOWHERE ELSE FOR ME TO GO.
I KNOW SHE'S NOT HERE.
BUT I HAVE TO AT LEAST LOOK.
IT'S WEIRD. WHAT IF KAMIKISHIRO ACTUALLY SENT THE LETTER HERSELF?
AND NOW THAT I'VE COME BACK TO TOWN... I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE HER AGAIN.
IT'LL BE JUST LIKE IN ONE OF THOSE MOVIES.


THE LETTER WAS NOTHING BUT SOME STUPID PRANK.
BUT NO, SHE'S NOT HERE. SHE'S NOT ANYWHERE.
EVERY-THING'S BEEN OVER FOR A WHILE. IT'S ALL IN THE PAST NOW..

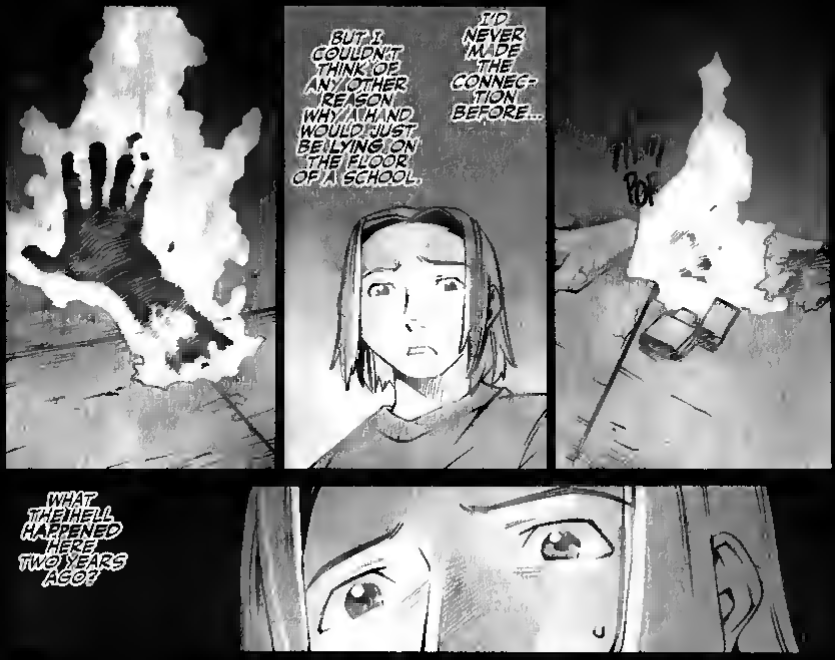
IT WAS ALWAYS METAPHORICAL NONSENSE, BUT SHE DIDN'T CARE IF I UNDERSTOOD IT OR NOT. SHE JUST LIKED KNOWING I'D LISTEN.
BACK WHEN I USED TO LAY THERE WITH HER ON THE RIVER-BANK...
SHE USED TO TELL ME ALL HER LITTLE SECRETS. SHE NEVER TOLD TANAKA SHIRO OR ANYONE ELSE... IT WAS ALWAYS ME.
AND THAT WAS ENOUGH.
FFFFF
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I LIKE SOME OTHER GIRL, I'LL ALWAYS BE CRAZY AND LOVABLE LITTLE KAMIKISHIRO THAT I'LL ALWAYS BE COMPARING THEM TO. SHE'S JUST THAT UNFORGETTABLE.
THAT'S ALL THE REASON I NEEDED TO KNOW IN MY HEART THAT I COULD LOVE HER FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.

Life is brief, young maiden, fall in love;
before the crimson bloom fades from your lips,
before the tides of passion cool within your hips,
for those of you who know no tomorrow.


SHIT.
CHING!
MM?

MM?
MAN.
NEVER KNEW THIS WAS HERE...

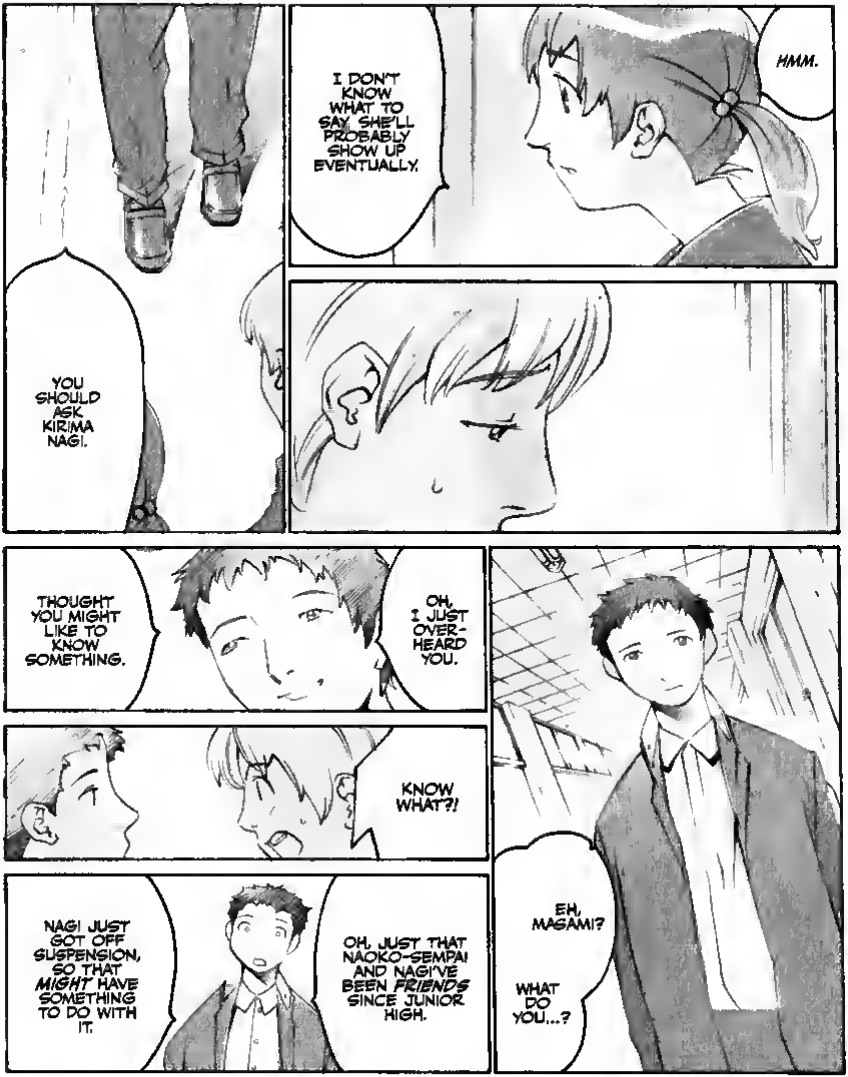
WAAAH?!!
WHEN KAMIKISHIRO HAD VANISHED, SHE W SN'T THE ONLY ONE. A NUMBER OF OTHER GIRLS H D GONE MISSING AROUND THE SAME TIME.
CRACK
OH MY GOD! WHAT THE HELL?!


I'D NEVER MADE THE CONNEC-TION BEFORE...
BUT I COULDN'T THINK OF ANY OTHER REASON WHY A HAND WOULD JUST BE LYING ON THE FLOOR OF A SCHOOL.
POP
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE TWO YEARS AGO?

OCT 28TH, TWO YEARS EARLIER
EH? THERE'S A FIRST YEAR ASKING FOR ME?
WHO?
DUNNO, BUT HE'S CUTE.
THERE YOU GO AGAIN. THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE PRESIDENT STEALING ALL THE GUYS FOR HERSELF TCH.
ANYWAY, LATER!
blush
HON-ESTLY...

UH, NIITOKI-SAN? HI, I'M TANAKA SHIRO FROM 1-D.
YOU WERE ON GATE DUTY THIS MORNING, WEREN'T YOU?
YOU... YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
TANAKA-KUN?

AS A DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE MEMBER, ONE OF OUR CHIEF DUTIES WAS TO STAND AT THE GATE AND MONITOR THE STUDENTS COMING IN AND OUT.
UH, YES, I WAS. WHY?
DID YOU SEE KAMIKISHIRO-SAN FROM 3-F COME IN TODAY?
NAOKO-SAN? YEAH, I'M PRETTY SURE SHE CAME TODAY.
HAVE YOU CHECKED HER CLASS?
I DID, BUT SHE'S NOT THERE. NOBODY IN THERE'S SEEN HER.
SHE SKIPPED...?
DID SHE GO HOME EARLY?
I DON'T THINK SO.
SHE SAID SHE HAD STUFF SHE NEEDED TO GET DONE.


HMM.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. SHE'LL PROBABLY SHOW UP EVENTUALLY.
YOU SHOULD ASK KIRIMA NAGI.
OH, I JUST OVER-HEARD YOU.
THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING.
KNOW WHAT?!
EH, MAGAMI?
WHAT DO YOU...?
OH, JUST THAT NAOKO-SEMPAI AND NAGI'VE BEEN *FRIENDS* SINCE JUNIOR HIGH.
NAGI JUST GOT OFF SUSPENSION, SO THAT *MIGHT* HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.

YOU ASKED HER OUT?!
WHY?!!
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?
EH, I TRIED TO ASK OUT NAGI ONCE.
EH...
DOESN'T MATTER, SHE SAID NO.
WHAT CLASS IS THIS KIRIMA GIRL IN?
2-D.
IT'S RIGHT NEXT DOOR.
THANKS!
W-WHOA! HANG ON!!

EH?
NO, KIRIMA-SAN HASN'T BEEN IN CLASS.
WAIT, I BETTER COME WITH YOU.
I KNOW I'M MAKING HER OUT TO BE SOME SORT OF BEAST, BUT IT'S TRUE! SHE PUNCHED OUT A KID'S FRONT TEETH ONCE!
THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF YOU JUST BURST IN ON HER!
EH? IS SOMETHING GOING ON?
OOO! TELL ME! TELL ME!!
HMM... SOUNDS LIKE SHE IS INVOLVED.
REALLY?
BUT SHE CAME IN THE GATE!

COULD I GET THROUGH HERE, PLEASE?
OH, UH, SORRY, YURIHARA-SAN.
キーンコーン
BILLING
カーンコーン
BOOOONK
SO, THE BELL RANG, AND THAT WAS THAT.
COME ON, SHIRO, WE'D BETTER GET BACK.
Y-YEAH...

I TRIED HER CELL. THERE'S NO ANSWER.
.....
NAOKO'S VANISHED! I CAN'T FIND HER ANY-WHERE!
I KNEW IT! WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE LISTENED TO YOU!
AND THAT MEANS WE'RE THROUGH WAITING! TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW!!
THIS CREATURE WOULD ALREADY BE GONE IF WE HAD!
WE SHOULD'VE JUST CALLED THE COPS...

IF THAT THING GOT NAOKO... SO HELP ME GOD...
.....
GLARE
SAY SOMETHING! YOU TALKED TO NAOKO DIDN'T YOU?!
I NEED SOME DAMN ANSWERS NOW!
TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE THINKING!
.....

I'M GONNA FIND THAT MANTICORE IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO!
GOD DAMN IT!
AND, ECHOES, YOU SURE AS HELL ARE GONNA HELP!

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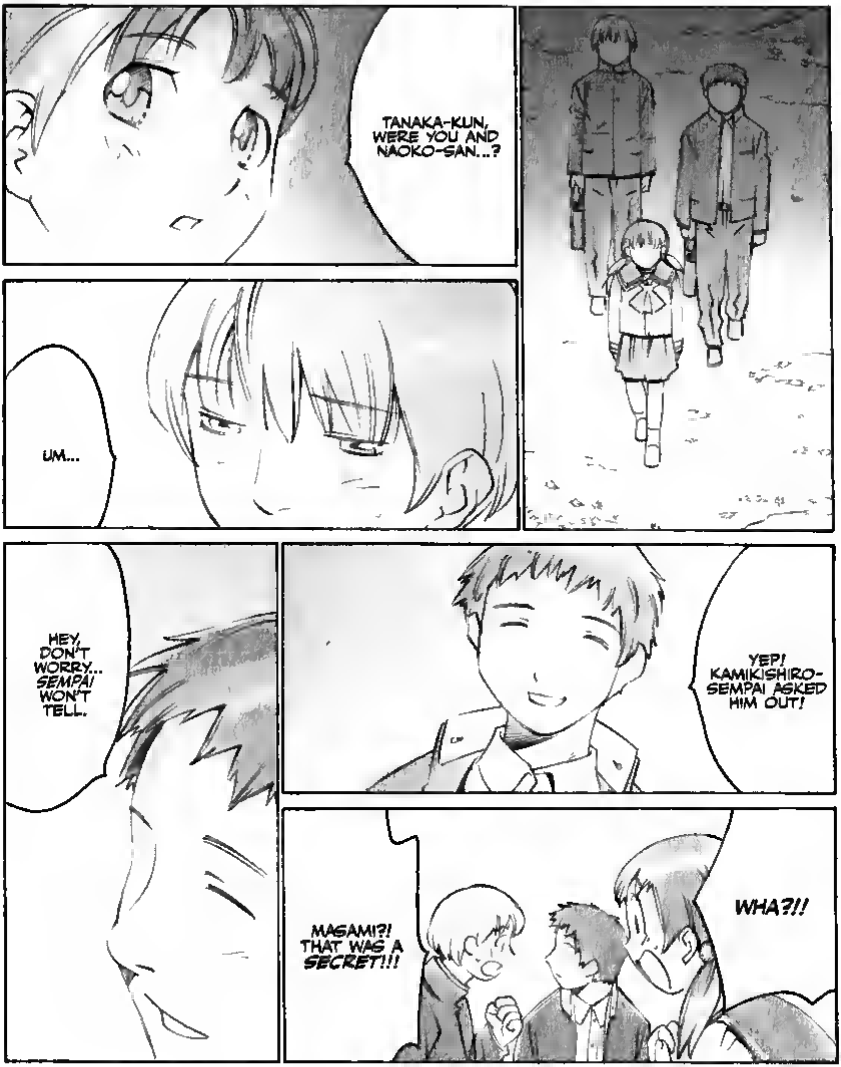
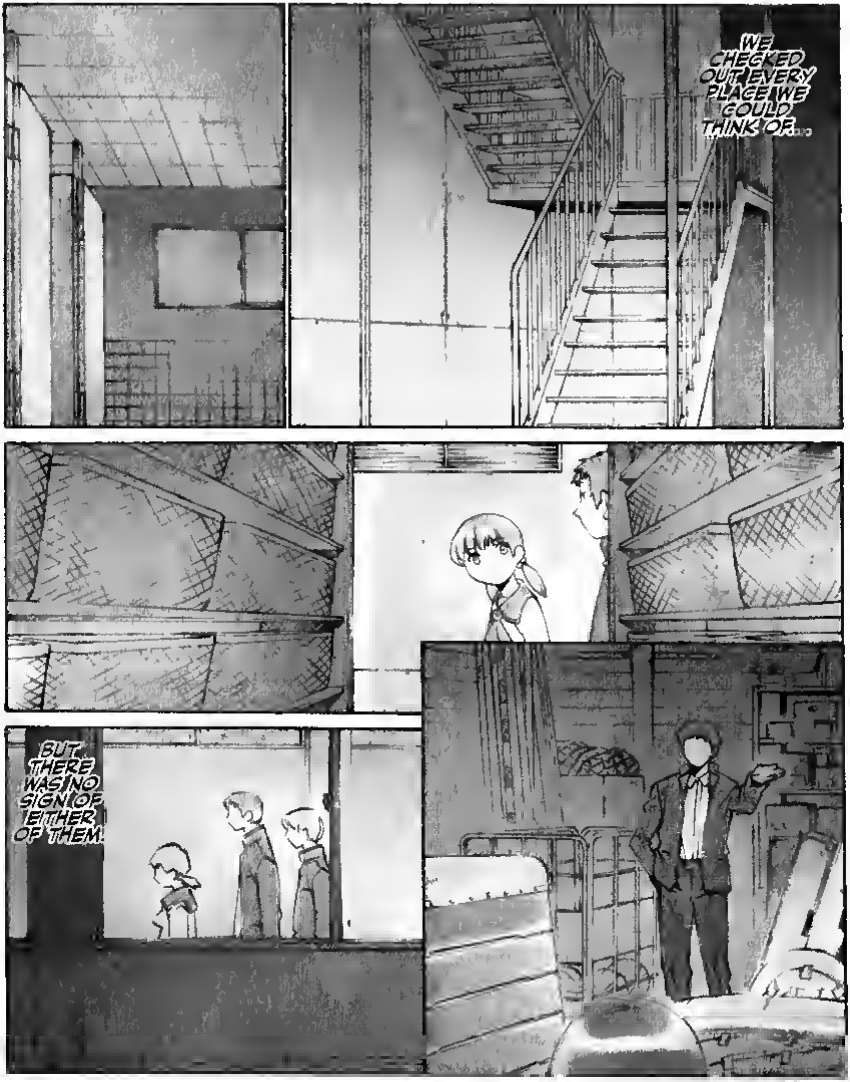
Chapter Twenty
第20話
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS, BUT IT BUGGED ME SO MUCH...
...THAT I VOLUNTARILY AGREED TO COVER GATE DUTY THAT DAY AFTER SCHOOL...

OH... I SEE.
NO... NOT YET.
AH, SEMPAI! HOW'D IT GO? ANY LUCK?

WE SHOULD PROBABLY DO THAT.
YEAH, I'M GETTING A LITTLE WORRIED.
I'M *SURE* SHE'S STILL HERE *SOMEWHERE*.
HEY, I'VE GOT AN *IDEA*. WHY DON'T WE LOOK FOR HER *TOGETHER*?
BUT *WHERE* DO YOU THINK THEY ARE?
PROBABLY SOMEWHERE *NOBODY* WOULD NOTICE 'EM. MAYBE THE ROOF?
OR UNDER THE GYM? OR, HEY, IT'S *FALL*, SO WHAT ABOUT THE *POOL* CHANGING ROOMS?
SOUNDS GOOD!
LET'S CHECK 'EM OUT!


TANAKA-KUN, WERE YOU AND NAOKO-SAN...?
UM...
HEY, DON'T WORRY... SEMPAI WON'T TELL.
YEP! KAMIKISHIRO-SEMPAI ASKED HIM OUT!
MAGAMI?! THAT WAS A SECRET!!!
WHA?!!

UM...
P-PLEASE... DON'T TELL ANYONE, OKAY?
WHOA!
NOPE.
DEAD SERIOUS.
YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?
BUT STILL...
WOOOOW!!!
SURE...
I WON'T.


WE CHECKED OUT EVERY PLACE WE COULD THINK OF...
BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF EITHER OF THEM.

COURSE.
THE TEACHER ON NIGHT WATCH'LL GET PISSED, BUT WHO CARES?
THE PA SYSTEM?
IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME...WHY DON'T WE JUST USE THE PA SYSTEM TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?
HMM...
WELL... IT *WOULD* BE FASTER.
OKAY. ***SURE!*** I'LL HANDLE THE TEACHER.

Please report to the broadcast officer!
宿直室
NIGHT DUTY ROOM
Attention... Will Kirima Nagi-san from 2-D...
If you're still in the building, we'd like to talk to you regarding Kamikishiro Naoko-san.

HOW DO THEY KNOW I'M STILL HERE?
Again, Kirima Nagi-san from 2-D, if you're in the building please come to the broadcast office.
ECHOES DO YOU SENSE ANYTHING? IS THE MANTICORE NEAR?!

BUT IF WE DON'T MAKE OUR MOVE NOW, IT'S GAME OVER. IT'LL JUST CHANGE ITS APPEARANCE AND VANISH.
YEAH, I KNOW. IT'S A TRAP.
CRITICAL
.....

AND THE TEACHER ISN'T HERE EITHER. WHAT'S GOING ON?
I DON'T THINK SHE'S COMING.
.....
WE DO IT ONE MORE TIME.
SO, WHAT NOW?

NO...
WE DO IT AGAIN.
NO, THERE'S NO WAY SHE DIDN'T HEAR THAT. MAYBE SHE HAS GONE HOME.
WHA?!
7"!
Twitter
B-BLACKOUT?!
DAMN, MUSTA BEEN THE BREAKERS!

KLANK!
UH, G-GUYS...?!

GRIZZLY!!
SWISH
WH-WHAT WAS THAT?!
"A THUMP"
EEK!
TANAKA-KUN?!!

EH...?
KRRIIZZZT
AAAGHH!!!

SHIT!
FOOOOFF
KIRIMA-SAN...?

WHO... WHO'S THAT TALKING?
ARE YOU SURE?
NONE OF 'EM HAVE BEEN ALTERED?
NONE OF THEM
WHAT?! IT'S NONE OF THEM, ECHOES?
K-KIJIMA-SAN...?
WH-WHAT'S GOING ON?
THERE WAS A BLACK-OUT, AND THEN...
OH...
AH, GOOD. YOU'RE AWAKE.
SORRY ABOUT THAT I HAD TO RULE YOU OUT, BUT I CAN'T SAY ANY MORE YOU JUST NEED TO GET HOME.

YOU HIT ME WITH A STUN GUN!
YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO JUST WALK AWAY! I GOTTA KNOW WHY?!
WHEN HELL FREEZES OVER!
I CAN SEE WHY YOU GOT PICKED TO BE PRESIDENT.
BUT TRUST ME, YOU NEED TO KEEP QUIET ABOUT THIS
TURN
AND WHY SHOULD I?!
FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.

RAAARH!
AH...!
OH... TH-THANKS.
KIRIMA-SAN, WHO IS THIS GUY?
MM? UH... WELL...
MY BOY-FRIEND.
I WASN'T BORN YESTERDAY, YOU KNOW. NOW, WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE?!
R-RIGHT! WHERE'S NAOKO-SAN?!

LOOK, I'M WORRIED ABOUT NAOKO TOO.
JUST TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON WE CAN HELP!
NO, YOU CAN'T.
WHY NOT?!
THIS IS NOT A NORMAL SITUATION.
UNLESS YOU'RE SCREWED UP LIKE ME YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY TACKLE IT.
HEH HEH HEH.

KIRIMA-SAN...
I DO UNDER-STAND.
MM?
WE...
WE CAN NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH NORMAL.
WHAT?
NORMAL STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH, HUH?

IF I HAD BEEN WITH *YOU* WHEN I MET *HER*... I WOULD'VE BEEN *HER* ENEMY.
I'M *SO* GLAD YOU REJECTED ME NOW.
WHAT THE *HELL* ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WHEN YOU MET *WHO*?
HEH. NAGI... NAGI... NAGI...
YOU'RE AS *NORMAL* AS THEY COME

GWAAP
WHIISH
SQUIIIP
ECHOES!!

GWA AAAA AGGH!
SAOTOME!
CONGRATU-LATIONS...
NOW YOU'RE OFFICIALLY OUR ENEMY.

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第21話
Chapter Twenty-One

KRRR
ROOH
THE MANTICORE?!

THWAAAM
FLAAP

SHHHK

SPLIIT

FINISH HIM!!
DO IT NOW!!!
WOOOOSH!!

FWUHAAM
TI
GRAB
THUOOP

CRUNCH
THWHOOP

UNNGHH
TO BE HONEST, THE PLAN WAS FOR KIRIMA NAGI TO KILL ME HERE, BUT OH WELL
THIS IS FUN TOO.

I SHOULD GET MY HANDS DIRTY MORE OFTEN.

HII
RUSTLE

THERE YOU ARE.

WOOSH
THWACK

EEK!

ST-STAY BACK!
HENH.
AND WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO WITH THAT?

WH-WHAT ARE YOU PEOPLE?!
THAT... THAT YURIHARA THING... WHAT IS IT?!
HHH... EATER...?
IS THE MANTICORE SHE'S A MAN-EATER. HA HA!
THAT "THING" YOU CALL IT...
OH GOD! TH-THEN THAT MEANS NAOKO-SAN'S..?
AND ALL THOSE MISSING PEOPLE..?
YEP. YUMMY.

YOU...!
DASH
YOU SICK FREAK!!!
AH, SUCH BEAUTIFUL EYES.
SO STRONG-WILLED AND POWERFUL. I JUST LOVE THEM.
YOU LITTLE...!

!
THWOOMP
ドカ
FWHAAAM
ENOUGH, SAOTOME-KUN.
FUUP
I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE

IT'S NO USE ASKING HIM FOR HELP. HE'S NEARLY DEAD ANYWAY.
I KNOW. I NEVER THOUGHT HE WOULD BE THIS WEAK.
I MUST SAY, I'M ACTUALLY A LITTLE DISAP-POINTED.
SEE, THAT WASN'T SO HARD. YOU MIGHT EVEN HAVE BEEN ABLE TO WIN WITHOUT RESORTING TO YOUR TRICKS

YOU... YOU'RE BOTH DEVILS! YOU'RE NOT EVEN HUMAN!
SWISH
カキ
CLUNK
WHAP

AH HA HA HA!
LITTLE GIRL YOU ARE STUPID, AREN'T YOU?!
I WAS NEVER HUMAN! AND SAOTOME-KUN...HE'S NOTHING LIKE YOU IGNORANT HUMANS.
SO WE'RE DEVILS?
THEN ALLOW ME TO WELCOME YOU TO HELL!!
.....
Y-YOU...
YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS!

EVEN IF YOU KILL US, SOMEONE ELSE'LL FIND YOU AND TAKE YOU DOWN!
AWW, HOW SWEET.
IT LOOKS LIKE ECHOES STILL WANTS TO FIGHT.

MY BODY INTO INFORMATION... TRANSMIT TO THE SOURCE!

FLOOSH!!

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Final Chapter
最終話
UNH...
E-ECHOES-SAN?

AAAAUUHHHH...

AAAA AAAA ARRR AHHH!
CRUNCH
UH-OH... TIME TO RUN!

YOU...

DIE!
FWSH
AH
LOOFF

SLLLSSHH
FWSH

ACK!

IT...IT CAN'T BE...!
BOOGIE-POP?!

NO. CURRENTLY, I AM BOOGIEPOP.
MIYASHITA-SAN?!
B-BUT THAT FACE... THAT'S...!
GOOD, THE ARM WAS CHARRED ENOUGH FOR ME TO SLICE THROUGH IT BUT THE NECK COULD [redacted] A PROBLEM.

THUNK
NOW, SHIRO-KUN!
FIRE!

SHIRO-KUN!
AIM FOR THE HEAD!!

SAOTOME-KUN...
THWOCK

CRKK
CRAK
WH-WHAT JUST HAP-PENED?
YOU KNOW HIM?
I DON'T KNOW HE FOUND ME WHILE I WAS RUNNING AND TOLD ME TO GET MY BOW
I...KIND OF KNOW... OF HIM...

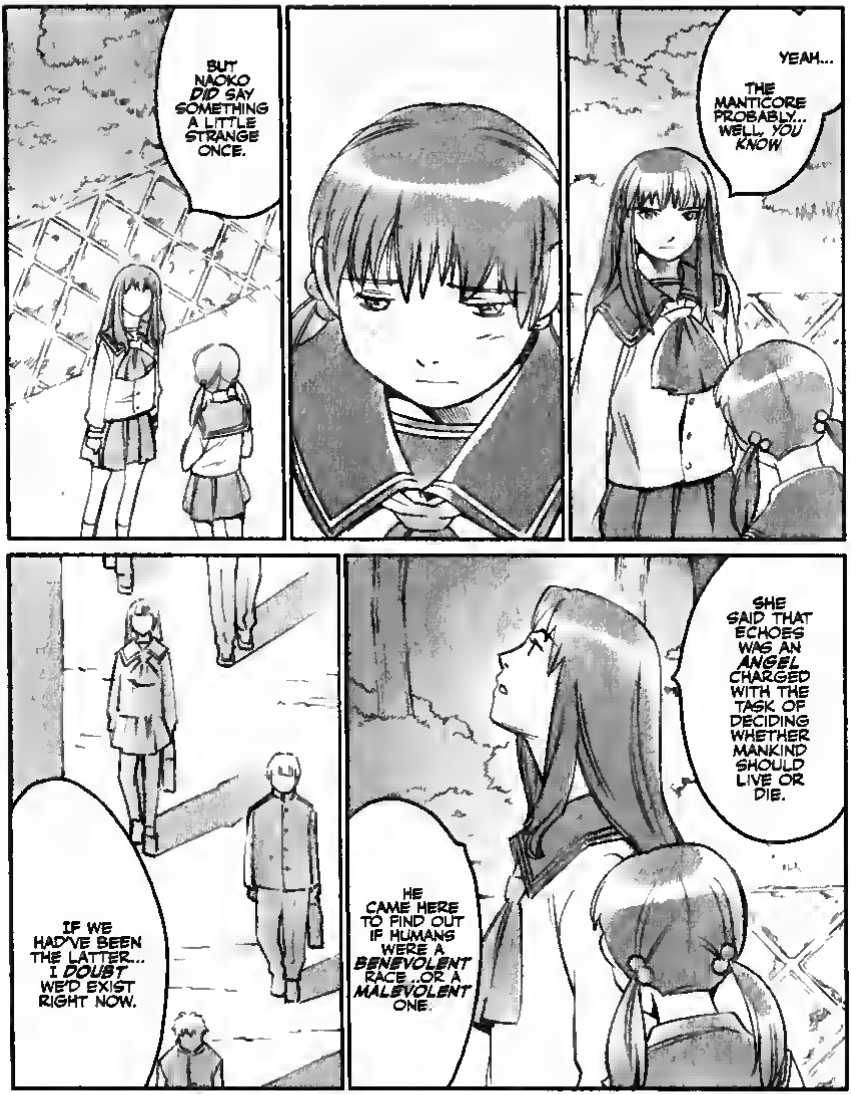
GUNK
GUNK
GUNK
UNNNH...
ECHOES GAVE UP PART OF HIS LIFE FOR YOU. IT SEEMS YOU'VE ESCAPED DEATH YET AGAIN
HELLO... FIRE WITCH.

IT'S THANKS TO YOUR ACTIONS THAT I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO UNCOVER THE NATURE OF THIS DANGER.
IF YOU WERE OUT WHY DIDN'T YOU GET HERE SOONER?
YOU AGAIN
DON'T SAY THAT.
CUTE. I GOTTA BE ME ALL THE DAMN TIME BUT YOU ONLY BOTHER COMIN' OUT WHEN THE SHIT HIT'S THE FAN. YOU'RE ONE SELFISH BASTARD, YOU KNOW THAT?

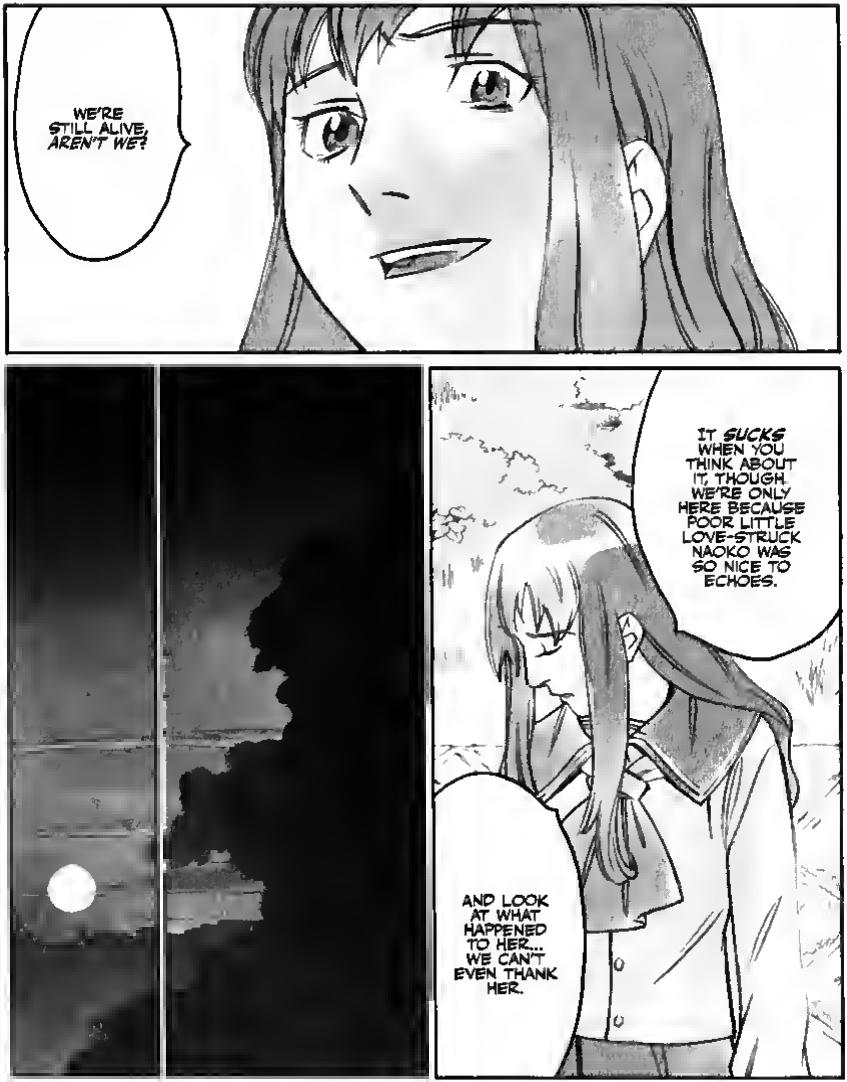
I SEE...
SO... IS IT OVER?
YES.
THANKS TO ECHOES' SACRIFICE AND THE COMMITTEE PRESIDENT'S COURAGE...
Y-YES?
NIITOKI KEI!

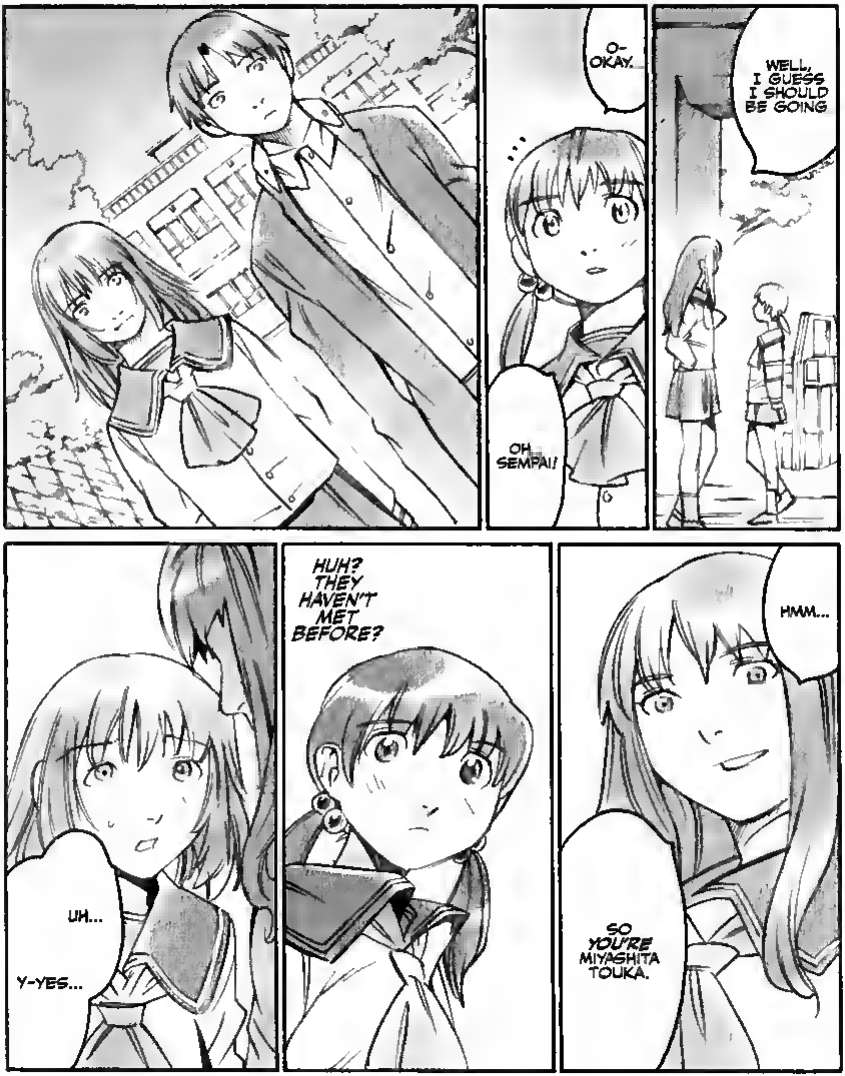
YOU CERTAINLY DO HAVE A STRONG WILL ABOUT YOU.
IT'S BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE *YOU* THAT THE WORLD MANAGES TO REMAIN A *HALFWAY* DECENT PLACE. ***NEVER*** LOSE THAT STRENGTH
BOW
IN THE WORLD'S STEAD, I THANK YOU.

IT HAD BEEN ONE HELL OF A NIGHT.
ALL I COULD DO WAS STAND THERE, STUNNED.
EVERY-THING WAS FINALLY OVER.
BUT I WAS JUST GLAD THAT...
SO, NAOKO-SAN IS REALLY...?
NOV 1ST


BUT NAOKO DID SAY SOMETHING A LITTLE STRANGE ONCE.
YEAH... THE MANTICORE PROBABLY... WELL, YOU KNOW
SHE SAID THAT ECHOES WAS AN ANGEL CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF DECIDING WHETHER MANKIND SHOULD LIVE OR DIE.
HE CAME HERE TO FIND OUT IF HUMANS WERE A BENEVOLENT RACE..OR A MALEVOLENT ONE.
IF WE HAD'VE BEEN THE LATTER... I DOUBT WE'D EXIST RIGHT NOW.

STILL...
MAYBE SHE WAS RIGHT.
I MEAN, I'M PRETTY SURE SHE WAS READING A LOT INTO THIS.
MY GUESS IS THAT ECHOES AND THE MANTICORE WERE BOTH SOME KIND OF FAILED BIOTECH EXPERIMENT.


WE'RE STILL ALIVE, AREN'T WE?
IT SUCKS WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THOUGH. WE'RE ONLY HERE BECAUSE POOR LITTLE LOVE-STRUCK NAOKO WAS SO NICE TO ECHOES.
AND LOOK AT WHAT HAPPENED TO HER... WE CAN'T EVEN THANK HER.


O-OKAY.
OH SEMPAI!
WELL, I GUESS I SHOULD BE GOING
HUH? THEY HAVEN'T MET BEFORE?
UH...
Y-YES...
HMM...
SO YOU'RE MIYASHITA TOUKA.

HI!
UH...
BUT YOU'RE---!
HEY, I'M KIRIMA.
NICE TO MEETCHA.
OH...
SO MANY THINGS
SIGH...
WHAT'S UP?

Life is brief, young maiden, fall in love;

before the crimson bloom fades from your lips,

before the tides of passion coòl within your hips,

for those of you who know no tomorrow.

THE END

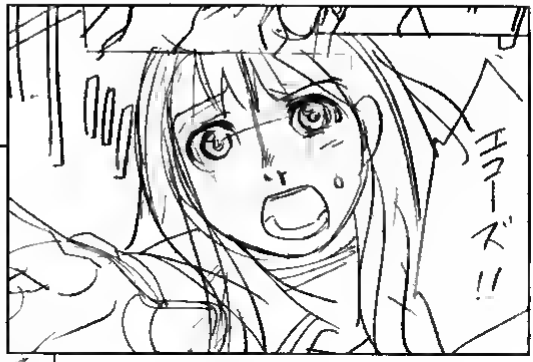
Vol.2

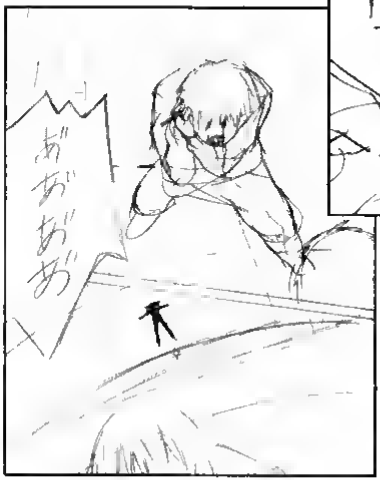
ブギーポップは笑わない

Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh

メイキングラフ集

SKETCH BOOK


エコーズ!!


あああああ

嘘ぉ!?
ぶべべべっ!!

ペコ!!
代わりに代って
死神するよ

ブギーポップは笑わない
1

ブギーポップは笑わない 2

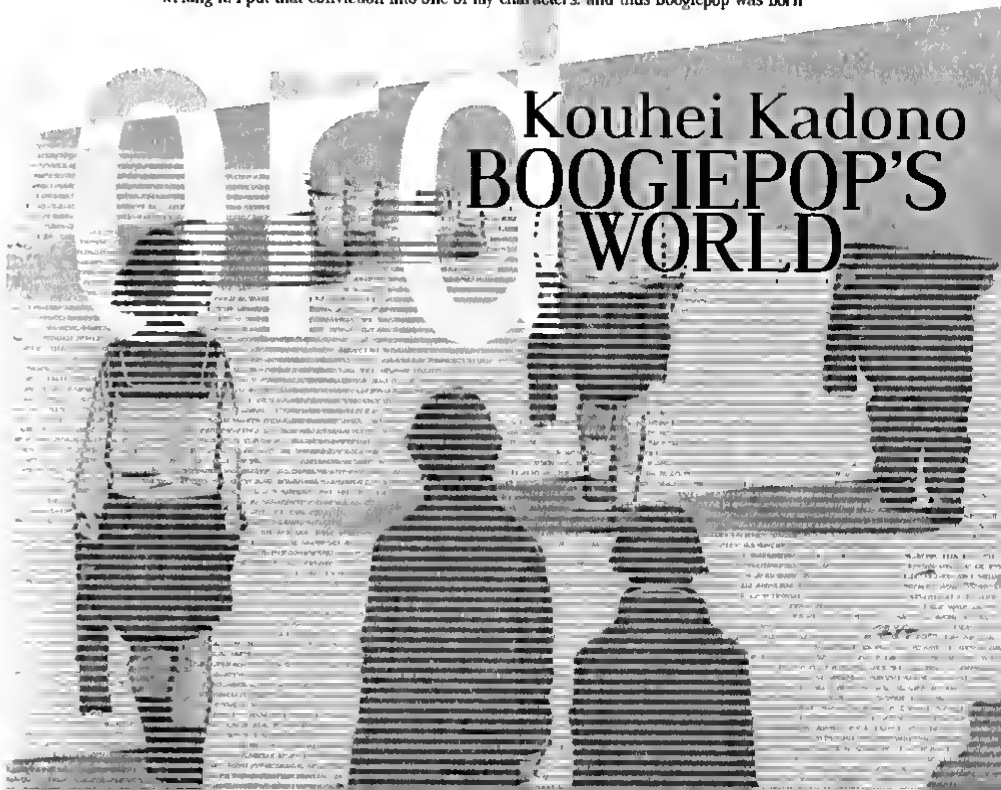
Of course Boogiepop is not technically a character—he's more of a phenomenon. He's not a reflection of my personality, or an excuse to air my opinions, but for some reason, he is always completely confident. His speeches are strange, and his clothes even stranger, but he's neither embarrassed by it nor defiantly proud of them. He's just strange—both immobile and unwavering. I gave him the name Boogiepop because bubbles have such a frightening tension to them that they burst at the slightest vibration. But the story is, in a sense, always chasing after some sort of vibration, so he ended up not being dramatic at all. Lord only knew if the book would sell, so putting a character like that in it should have been cause for hesitation (after all, I'd been rejected before on exactly those grounds), but for some reason, I didn't feel like that at all. Instead, I slapped him down on the roof with a sense of utter calm, "If he's not in it, there's no point in writing the book." The moment he was there, everything seemed so easy. I'd known it before I even started writing. When I'd long since given up trying to follow incomprehensible classes and sat staring out of the window at the roof of the opposite building, I'd daydreamed about how great it would be if someone weird was up there. This was my only source of conviction, and armed with that quiet certainty, I attempted to write good books to sell to a world I'd long since decided had no value.

But inevitably, the more I wrote, the more the characters took on lives of their own, despite my best efforts to the contrary, and lots of scenes I thought Boogiepop should be in, no longer welcomed him. Takeda Ken, Suema Kazuko, Saotome Masami, Nitoki Kei—each chapter's main character came alive and lived in their school in a way I never had. "I never went to a school like this..." I thought, growing a little sad as I wrote. And the novel I thought I was writing at the end of my rope ended up being about a world that was self-centered, odd, and bittersweet. I still dream about the school this book is set in, but even now, I'm just sitting there, doing nothing. Boogiepop has never once shown up in my dreams. And I'm still writing every novel like I'm at the end of my rope. Part of me wants to moan about this, but as Boogiepop would say, "That's the way the world is." That's the kind of guy he is. Oh well. The End.

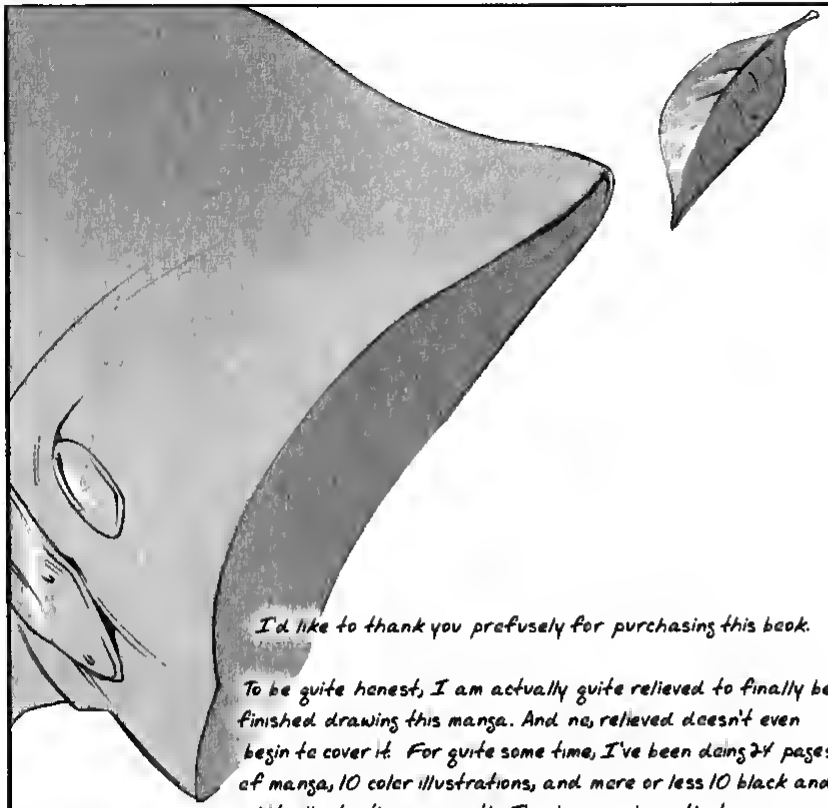
(Is this reminiscing or bitching?)
(Whatever.)

BGM "Heartbreaker" by LED ZEPPELIN

I was at the end of my rope. Naturally, I'm speaking of my state of mind at the time I wrote *Boogiepop and Others*. I was flat out broke, and an editor at one of the publishing houses had started saying things like, "There's no point in you sending us anything else," and it felt like the realization that I wasn't going to ever accomplish anything by writing novels. It was like I was just hovering around the outskirts of my life. It under that sort of pressure that wrote the book. Even now, I sometimes wonder why I chose to set it in a high school, considering how little I had ever managed to accomplish there. Granted, I had written quite a few novels by then, but it was the first time one had actually set one in a high school. I had been convinced I couldn't write about it, since I had basically never done anything of importance during my time in school, but somehow, I changed my mind. I remember being absolutely convinced that I could write this book, even before I started writing it. I put that conviction into one of my characters, and thus Boogiepop was born.



Kouhei Kadono
BOOGIEPOP'S WORLD



I'd like to thank you profusely for purchasing this book.

To be quite honest, I am actually quite relieved to finally be finished drawing this manga. And no, relieved doesn't even begin to cover it. For quite some time, I've been doing 24 pages of manga, 10 color illustrations, and more or less 10 black and white illustrations a month. I've been so busy that it seemed like I was missing out on so much. Give me back my youth! (I'm 31...)

Now that I've returned to health and sanity, I can see all sorts of blunders, but this is the absolute best manga I was capable of drawing at the time. If you enjoyed it, then I'm honored.

Kouji Osata

BOOGIEPOP
The Ultimate Guide PART 2

Boogiepop: a haunting series that has spawned legions of fans across the planet. For those of you who've never seen the anime or the movie, welcome to the second installment of the ultimate guide covering all things *Boogiepop*!

by Lesley Smith

The beam of light featured at the climax of *Boogiepop and Others* was not the end of the story, but merely the beginning of the epilogue. From January 6, 2000 to March 22, 2000, a twelve-episode anime series took Japan by storm and added a whole new dimension to the already complex mythology of the *Boogiepop* franchise. This series was called *Boogiepop Phantom*.

Boogiepop Phantom is often mentioned in the same breath as *Serial Experiments Lain* and the more recent *Paranoia Agent*. All three series share a philosophic style and a dark, almost disturbed, feel that encourages the viewer to pay extra close attention and draw his or her own conclusions from the events shown. None of the answers are ever simple and a true understanding of the show's deeper meaning may not even be truly found until the second or third viewing. For trivia buffs, *Lain* and *Boogiepop Phantom* are often noted as share a voice actress-that of Shimizu Kaori who provides not only the voice of Lain herself, but also Miyashita Touka in *Boogiepop Phantom*.

Storyline

One night, a bright beam of light was seen shooting up to the heavens from the location of Shinyo Academy. Moments later an electromagnetic pulse rippled across the city destroying computers and causing millions of homes to go dark. The form of Yurihara Minako which the Manticore adopted was gone, and the Academy students were continuing on with their lives, but all is not normal.

Boogiepop remains, despite completing his mission and vanquishing Manticore. However not everything is as it seems. As fate would have it, there is actually a Boogiepop doppelgänger running around who, out of "respect" for the original, has dubbed himself "Boogiepop Phantom." Despite the fact that both of these Boogiepops dress the same, it is possible to tell the two apart: the original Boogiepop possesses Miyashita Touka's short stature and her face, while Boogiepop Phantom is taller, has a more feminine voice, and possesses the face of Manticore's final form, Yurihara Minako.

Boogiepop Phantom is one of the more prominent characters in the series, even though he only appears for a relatively short period of time. His choice of names is apt as he is indeed a phantom—an immaterial being created by a combination of Manticore's attempt to survive its physical destruction and Boogiepop's own memories.

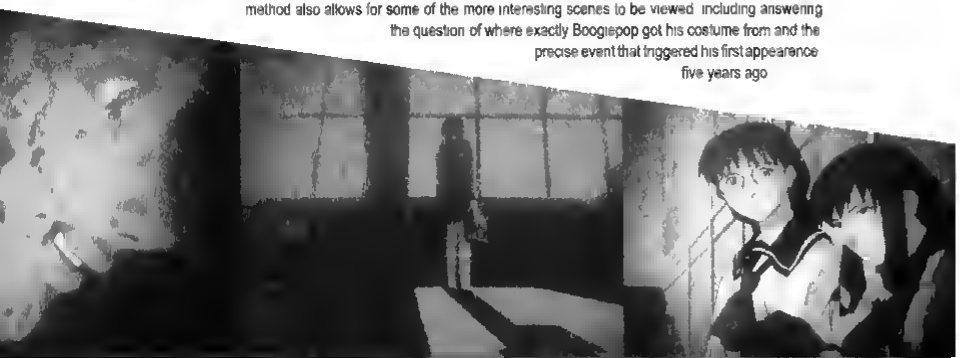
Since the night when the beam of light split the sky, all has not been right in the city. An aurora can be seen in the sky and the pulse that expanded across the city did not just affect electronics, but also people. As a result, various students at Shinyo Academy and also Hijindani High School began exhibiting abilities they had not possessed before that night.

BOOGIEPOP PHANTOM ©2001 Kouhei Kadono/Mediaworks

Fractured Timeline

Each episode in the series focuses on a particular person and events are told in the same non-linear vignette style found in both the books and the live action movie. The series itself covers three specific time periods: five years before the events of *Boogiepop and Others* when a serial killer was active in the city, the recent past contained in *Boogiepop and Others*—such as the climax of the novel or earlier events such as Saotome peddling Manticore's drug, and finally, a period of time set in the present that spans the months after the beam of light.

To explain this to the viewer, each scene is broken down and numbered with the location and the time period indicated. This method also retains the omnipresent feel of the entire *Boogiepop* franchise by showing the same scene or events a number of times from different perspectives, often out of chronological order. In the case of the anime series, this can leave the viewer quite confused and it takes another couple of episodes before the context is discovered. This method also allows for some of the more interesting scenes to be viewed, including answering the question of where exactly Boogiepop got his costume from and the precise event that triggered his first appearance five years ago.



Character Designs

Despite introducing a vast number of new characters not referred to in the novels, *Boogiepop Phantom* also sees the return of Kirima Nagi, Suema Kazuko and, of course, Miyashita Touka, amongst others. The character designs for these more familiar characters, including Saotome and Boogiepop, are also based on those drawn by Kouji Ogata, the illustrator of the novels.

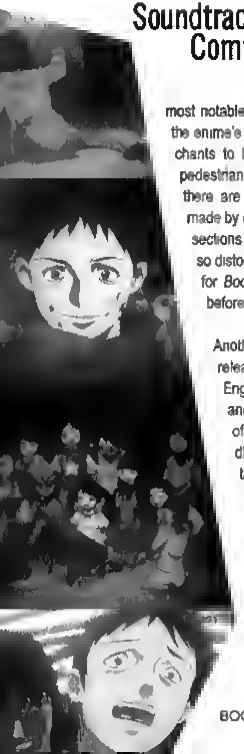
This anime itself was rendered in a style that gives the entire series a dark tone and bleak feeling. Even the city itself feels claustrophobic. *Boogiepop Phantom* blurs the lines between horror and science-fiction in a way that forces viewers to contemplate philosophical questions about life, death, and the very natures of both time and reality. The only way to truly grasp what's going on is to re-watch each episode multiple times and immerse oneself in the entire *Boogiepop* mythology.

Soundtrack and Commentary

No discussion about *Boogiepop Phantom* would be complete without touching on one of its most notable features—its soundtrack. Best described as "unique," the anime's soundtrack covers everything from haunting Gregorian chants to hard-core electronic beats. In addition to single-noted pedestrian noise that reverberates throughout the entire series, there are a number of interesting sound effects, like the noise made by a CD skipping, which can be heard in the most unlikely of sections of the anime. Indeed, many of the sound effects are either so distorted they cannot be identified or were invented specifically for *Boogiepop Phantom* and have simply never been recorded before.

Another aspect which made *Boogiepop Phantom's* Region 1 DVD release both anticipated and unique were the accompanying English-language commentaries by the producer Jeff Thompson and the ADR Director Joe Digiorgi. Still a rarity on the majority of anime DVDs out there, the commentaries give another dimension to the series by offering insight into the monumental task of translating the series into English and further tidbits about the episodes that casual viewers might miss.

When you've finished watching *Boogiepop Phantom*, be sure to pick up *Boogiepop Dual* Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 for the third and fourth parts of our *Boogiepop: The Ultimate Guide* as we delve into the other novels and books that comprise this unforgettable franchise.



BOOGIEPOP PHANTOM ©2001 Kouhei Kadono/Mediaworks

Cast of Characters

The twelve episodes focus on a number of characters—including 'Fire Witch' Kirima Nagi—that have been affected by the events surrounding the beam of light. Some characters have gained special abilities, while others have been forced to cross paths with characters like Boogiepop Phantom, the mysterious butterfly girl known as Kisaragi Manaka, or the psychic essence which is all that remains of the Manticore—an essence that adopts various forms including that of Saotome Masami. Added to this, each of the characters—be they good or evil—have their own lives, loves and dreams, as well as a good measure of problems that effect their personalities making them feel more rounded and real.

The overall theme of the series is one concerning evolution, hence its usage as the volume tag on The Right Stuf International's Region 1 DVDs—each of which were numbered Evolution 1 through 4.

Each of the students displaying new abilities—from Jonouchi's ability to remove the bugs of emotion on a person's heart to Manaka's gift of expressing memories as butterflies—are evolving and this is something that the mysterious Towa Organization wants stopped at all costs. Ironically, many of these gifts were the results of drugs injected into patients by the Towa Organizations that had been lying dormant for years and were only triggered into existence when the beam of light awakened them.

As a result of this, the Towa Organization and its weird assortment of agents appear throughout the series. Some of the more colorful agents include artificially created or 'composite' humans like Mo Murder, Scarecrow, Spooky E and Snake Eye (who has taken on the appearance of a police officer named Monta). While an important aspect of the series, very little is actually discovered about this secretive and mysterious agency aside from the fact that they wish to kill anyone showing signs of being further along the evolutionary path than regular humans.

This is where Boogiepop Phantom comes in, his purpose is to clean up the mess caused by the Towa Organization. This involves spiriting the altered students to safety and placing them in stasis in unused tunnels beneath the city—presumably until the day the rest of humanity catches up with them. He also has to deal with the after-effects of the event that created him, such as the resurrection of Manaka by Echoes (who, as a result, now possesses his speech impediment) and all before the electromagnetic field recovers. Failure will spell not only the end of the psychic residue of Manticore, but also the various apparitions like Poom Poom and Boogiepop Phantom himself.

About the Author

Born in 1968, Kouhei Kadono grew up uncertain about his direction in life. He spent a considerable portion of his early years frittering away his youth before somehow ending up writing novels.

In 1997, Kadono-sensei's first *Boogiepop* novel, *Boogiepop and Others*, took First Place in the Media Works' Dengeki Game Novel Contest. Early the following year, the novel was released to widespread acclaim and ignited the Japanese "light novel" (young adult) trend. Since that time, Kadono-sensei has written thirteen *Boogiepop* novels and several related works such as the *Beat's Discipline* short story collections and the two *Boogiepop* manga series entitled *Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh* and *Boogiepop Dual*. In its entirety, the *Boogiepop* series has seen over two million copies in print and spawned a live action movie and a hit anime series.

In addition to the *Boogiepop* universe, Kadono-sensei's body of literary work includes a wide array of fantasy and mystery novels such as the *Jiken, Soul Drop, Limited World* and *Night Watch* series.

About the Illustrator

Born in 1970, a native of Osaka, Kouji Ogata spent his early twenties struggling to get enough credits to graduate from Osaka Design School. In late 1996, Ogata-sensei was commissioned by Media Works to illustrate the first *Boogiepop* novel, *Boogiepop and Others*.

At the time, Ogata-sensei was simply a rising star with a distinctive, eye-catching art style, but he gradually was able to further hone his artistic skills with each subsequent work. His watercolor-style paneling seen in the two-volume *Boogiepop Doesn't Laugh* manga series was a particularly high point of his early career.

In addition to providing illustrations for novels and manga, Ogata-sensei has been involved with supplying character designs for anime productions including *Boogiepop Phantom*, *Spirit* and *Gun-iro no kami no Agito*.

In his free time he enjoys motorcycles, tennis, and remote controlled models.

Boogiepop doesn't laugh

VOLUME 2 of 2

story by Kouhei Kadono art by Kouji Ogata

STAFF CREDITS

translation	**Andrew Cunningham**
adaptation	**Adam Arnold**
copy editor	**Jason DeAngelis**
lettering	**Nicky Lim**
retouch	**Cheese**
cover design	**Nicky Lim**
editor	**Adam Arnold**

publisher **Seven Seas Entertainment**

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BOOGIEPOP WA WARAWANAI Vol 2
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